



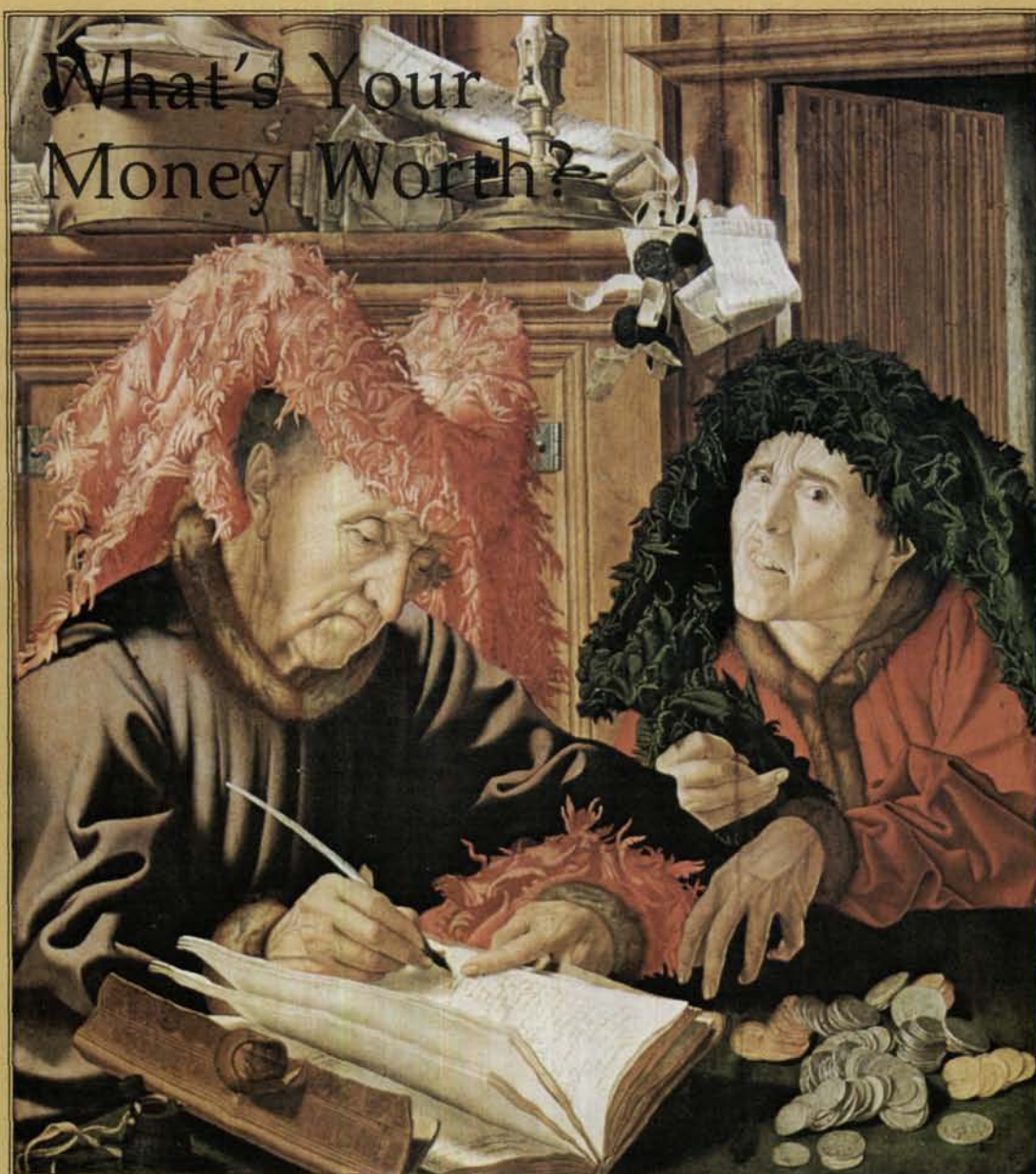
The Most Dangerous Man in America

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by Stephen Chapman

THE NEW REPUBLIC

November 11, 1978

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from Washington
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Serious Problems

The deflating dollar abroad, the collapsing stock market at home, the prospective failure of perhaps two-thirds of the eligible voters on Tuesday to vote (perhaps 100 million) are all connected, I think, in a subtle way. I think they stem from a lack of confidence in our political institutions to formulate and put into effect critical programs. It is easy to personify these matters in one figure and blame the president. That is frequently done. But in the matter of energy, for example, the problem had been recognized for five years, under three presidents. The bullet was going around looking for somebody to bite it, but nobody did. Institutions were not adequate to meet the problem. There was a national failure of nerve, of will; we saw what had to be done but we could not force ourselves to do it, short of a much closer cooperation of president and Congress. To the consternation of the world the oil trade deficit continued and ultimately, the dollar dropped. Simultaneously at home, investors could not sustain faith in government's ability to deal with inflation, short of a recession, and dumped stocks on Wall Street. And in a lackluster election, the electorate expresses its sense of futility by the empty ballot box. In mid-term 1962, some 46.1 percent voted; 1966, 45.4 percent; 1974, 38 percent; and in 1978? Fill in the last figure yourself; chances are the slide will continue. It's apathy—and apathy, alas, can raze cities, subvert armies and destroy nations.

This is not doomsaying. I think that America deserves a better government than it's getting. If it discloses a weakness of government to meet modern challenges, the problem deserves to be explored. The energy

problem is one example. There are others. Our new tax bill is a monstrosity. Why can't president and legislature work closer together? There are other examples. Why does the world's richest nation stand only 17th in preventing infant mortality? Why among developed countries are the US and South Africa alone in having no system of national health insurance? Why can't we control crime . . . or illegal immigration? Why did Canada turn out 71 percent of its voters; England 73 percent; West German 91 percent at their last elections but the US only 53 percent in the Carter-Ford contest?

Edward Kennedy last month said: "Representative government on Capitol Hill is in the worst shape I have seen it in my sixteen years in the Senate. The heart of the problem is that the Senate and the House are awash in a sea of special interest campaign contributions and special interest lobbying."

That's part of the trouble, no doubt, but there are institutional problems too, I think. Political parties are debilitated, and we have a random way of picking presidents. Under the parliamentary system in Canada, Trudeau was a member of the House of Commons, minister of justice and attorney general before he became prime minister; in England Callaghan was home secretary, chancellor of the exchequer, and secretary of state for foreign affairs, before reaching the top office. By contrast, Jimmy Carter was governor of Georgia, but he was never tried out in national affairs.

Can America learn something from the parliamentary system? Massachusetts maverick Congressman Michael Harrington, in a poignant farewell speech to the House of Representatives last month, saw public frustration growing over government stalemate and called for "major overhaul in the constitutional framework in which we operate." What kind of overhaul? "The model I prefer would be a distinctly American parliamentary setup, in which the president and cabinet would be drawn from Congress, for a term concurrent with Congress, and would serve both as legislative leadership and policy coordination for the independent bureaucracy. . . ." That is his verdict after nine years' experience.

By a coincidence, syndicated columnist Roscoe Drummond has just devoted a series of six articles to a proposed adaptation of the parliamentary system to the United States. Like every knowledgeable observer in Washington,

he is alarmed at the halting, feeble, ineffective way government has been functioning. Somehow party discipline must be restored; confidence in government revived. There must be a way to compel Congress and president to work closer together. Drummond would establish a question period for the president and members of his cabinet, at joint sessions of Congress. (This was advocated, incidentally, by both Carter and Mondale before they respectively became president and vice president.) He would have the president name senators and representatives to key posts in the cabinet. He would draw congressional cabinet members, and the leadership of the president's party in Congress, into the preparation of the administration's legislative agenda, a move that would almost automatically create a responsible party position with some chance of enactment.

Speculations like this may seem nebulous to some, and radical to others, but there is stark brutality about some problems America faces which require a new look. We are the only big nation using the presidential system. It provides giddy stalemates and periods of non-government. There is voter frustration: "The level of voter turnout in the United States has fallen below that of every other democracy in the world with the single exception of Botswana," says Curtis Gans, director of the Committee for the Study of the American electorate. One particular land mine that I fear is the Constitutional veto power of 34 senators over the upcoming SALT II treaty with Russia—34 members out of a Congress of 535. The House, of course, doesn't vote and one third of the Senate can block a treaty. The Founding Fathers planted the land mine that has exploded before. A third of the Senate blocked America's entry into the League of Nations in 1919, insuring World War II.

While the dollar plunges abroad and the stock market at home, and while thousands express their sense of futility by not voting, we must look over our venerable institutions. Oddly enough, Chief Justice Warren Burger is designated to do just that. The 200th anniversary of the Constitution is only nine years away, and he heads a commission to prepare a fitting observance. The government cost \$5.1 million to run in 1792, and we are still using the same institutions. The chief justice is naming learned men to see if any of these institutions can, perchance, be improved.

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October 28, 1978



Premature Prizes

Orwell said it about saints, but Nobel peace laureates also should always be judged guilty until they are proven innocent. No doubt it would have appeared more seemly had the authorities in Oslo waited to bestow their decorations till a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt actually had been signed. In any case it is evident, at least in the cases of Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin, that the Nobel Peace Prize is not awarded on the basis of either character or personal history. The two have been honored for their last act, and an uncompleted one at that. Extraordinary as their present achievement may be, little else in their lives commends them to us as peacemakers. But, as one Washington cynic observed, Teddy Roosevelt was also accorded the same honors. Nonetheless, it is hard to countenance putting Begin, historically a zealot for the ultra right-wing Zionist heresy of redemption by violence and intimidation, and Sadat, wartime pro-Nazi and only yesterday a vulgar and belligerent Jew-baiter, in the company of Albert Schweitzer, Andrei Sakharov, René Cassin, and Martin Luther King Jr. Yet statesmanship is so scarce in our time that apparently it must be rewarded, even if it emerges from scoundrels. What the prime minister of Israel and the president of Egypt have demonstrated is unanticipated flexibility in a very tight spot. Reason enough, alas, to be grateful.

Some American chauvinists and President Carter's own cheerleaders insist that justice would have required that our president also be invited to share in

the cash, kudos and ceremony. Indeed, he did provide a forum at Camp David, and he has devoted considerable energy and patience to bringing about a peace. Yet it is impossible for us to forget the variety of dead ends into which President Carter tried to push the adversary parties. Even today, one senses, he creates as many impediments to a settlement as he does opportunities for it.

It may not please the Carter entourage to be reminded of it, but the one genuine claimant to recognition for his seminal role in the Middle East peace process is Henry Kissinger. The Camp David breakthrough is a vindication of his step-by-step efforts in the region and his general theoretical perspective on how to break the war momentum. The Carter administration's record on the Middle East has consisted of repudiating Kissinger's ideas, trying formulas which Kissinger long ago contemplated and rejected, and finally rediscovering, after much anguish for us all, the wisdom of his approach.

This has not prevented Carter and some of his advisers from trying to retrieve and reapply their discredited assumptions. Paramount among these (and passionately held in this administration) is the belief that peace will come only through a "comprehensive" settlement that involves all the contentious parties and issues in the area. In pursuit of this aim, the American interlocutors have pushed Sadat into a harder line on West Bank issues than he otherwise would be inclined

to take. There is little pretense among Sadat's emissaries at the Madison Hotel that they care a fig for the Palestinian extremists or the Syrians who have pronounced an anathema on them. Assistant Secretary of State Harold Saunders is the particular villain of this piece. It's not simply the wary King Hussein whom he wants to bring into the action. For a long time, he has been a special patron for President Assad, the Damascus Ba'athists and others who profess dedication to an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank, and he is not beyond a little bit of diplomatic prevaricating in their interest. So, to win their support for the Camp David accords, and to gain them a role in Middle East diplomacy that so far they have not earned, Saunders has been stretching the substance of the understandings reached between Carter and Begin. By now, it is almost indisputable that the Israeli prime minister never agreed to a ban on new settlements in the West Bank beyond duration of the negotiations for the agreement with Egypt. Maybe he should have, but he didn't; and this fact hasn't kept our diplomatic folk from petulantly and pointlessly insisting that he did. On the expansion of existing settlements, there had never been any doubt at all, despite the fit of temper displayed by the president and secretary of state after the announcement in Jerusalem that Israel would expand some settlements already in place. Carter himself told a group of reporters at breakfast on September 27 that he had expected "a very limited expansion plan that would be revealed before the negotiations for the West Bank-Gaza self-government would be completed."

To be sure, Begin is not a master of fact. It may be argued that he needn't have publicized his plan about adding some 300 family units in various West Bank settlements. But we have seen that this was not exactly a surprise pulled on an unsuspecting world. Can it really be that the Arabs didn't know what was agreed to at Camp David or that they didn't know what the president had told so many other people? Moreover, Saunders, by telling Arabs that Israel's terms were less firm than they are, put Begin into a difficult situation. Some of his oldest comrades have turned on him, charging treachery. Many of his remaining coalition allies are restive over the perils with which Israel has now committed itself to live. They became more restive still on learning that Saunders was offering the Arabs certain provisions for the West Bank which had never been negotiated and others for Jerusalem which had never even been raised at Camp David. As it happens, despite Saunders's provocations, and others by Ambassador Atherton and higher-ups in Washington, Begin was able to turn his predicament into a plus for the ongoing negotiations. With his redundant announcement about new housing in old settlements, he won the unanimous support of his cabinet for the further (and, of course, reciprocated) concessions Israel will now be making to complete the treaty with Egypt.

The Carter administration seemingly cannot stop trying to coerce Israel into making concessions in advance of, or as substitute for, negotiations with appropriate partners. Israel's very concrete (and essentially unilateral) concessions on the West Bank have won no corresponding response from those who will benefit. Nonetheless, the routine hectoring of Israel by our government and press is unabated. Just about everyone demands that Israel behave as if Syria is not preparing to extend its virulent imperium across bleeding Lebanon and down to the southern border. Israel will no doubt be submitted to more humiliating salami tactics before and after a peace treaty with Egypt is signed. On two issues, however, they will not succeed—the two, in fact, on which they have in these last days faltered so ignominiously. One is Jerusalem, where symbolic sovereignty over some Arab enclaves could well be restored to some Arab authority, but where also the claims of history, demography and living reality have established it as the unified and open capital of Israel.

The second is with reference to the disputed territories in historic Palestine. Surely Begin's self-rule plan, even as modified in the Maryland hills, is not the final design for the West Bank and Gaza. The wisest Israelis, and also the most numerous, do not wish to govern a heavily populated captive area. Too much of their ethos and strength would be at risk were they to do so. When Jordanians and Palestinians come forward to stake their claim in negotiations (by which is meant compromise), it will doubtless be honored despite the reluctance of the current prime minister to say so. But no government of Israel can be expected to alienate the right of Jews to live as Jews anywhere in the Holy Land. Much as Arabs live in Israel, with their own religious courts and schools and protected traditions, much as other Arabs will no doubt also return to Israel, so too Jews, limited in number to be sure, will live—as they had for millennia till their expulsion in the middle years of this century—in a tiny land mass which is home to two peoples. By what moral authority does our bloodless diplomatic bureaucracy purport to have it be otherwise?

On the Hill.

Congress Off-season

They've exchanged their pinstripes for pullovers and their hard-soled shoes for sneakers, but the bureaucrats of Congress—the 39,404 white collars in the legislative branch who don't face reelection—still report for work as usual. They emerge each morning

Energy solutions and nonstarters•Where a government role is needed•Accent on achievement

Is there a role for government in the energy business, or should the government just stand aside and leave it to the energy companies?

Of course there's a role for government—an important, affirmative role. An essential role. That's just the point: The government seems incapable of comprehending what role it should play and how it should play it.

Many of the country's energy problems today stem from government's inaction in critical spheres at crucial times in the past. As a result, some of our present problems are soluble only if the federal government plays a stronger role—of the right sort.

As we have said over and over during the past seven or eight years, what is essential is a comprehensive national energy policy, to set goals and to create the parameters and establish a climate within which the private sector can operate efficiently.

- Only government can set forth national goals and work out the necessary compromises to reconcile conflicting regional and other interests and to recognize the natural priorities among various energy sources.
- Only government can develop the ground rules under which private industry must work.
- Only government can formulate a national policy on environmental trade-offs that will strike a sensible and workable balance between unacceptable environmental risks and unacceptable economic risks.
- Only government can hammer out the sort of balanced policy that does not permit extremist approaches to environmental protection to delay for years progress toward achievement of national goals on energy.

It seems to us that the policy formulated by the government should, among other things, recognize the need for reasoned and balanced economic growth to create jobs for a growing population and to enable more and more disadvantaged Americans to attain a higher standard of living.

Having struck a reasonable and rational balance on fundamentals, the nation should then, we believe, develop a timetable with quantified goals for such component elements as crude oil, natural gas, coal, and nuclear power, liquefaction and gasification of coal, oil from shale, and, in a longer time frame, energy from more exotic sources. In our view, this should not be a finely detailed blueprint,

but rather a clear and unequivocal statement of basic energy goals. The primary goal should be greater energy self-sufficiency.

For at least the rest of this century, conventional oil and natural gas seem certain to remain our primary energy sources, and the only other two major sources on which we can count with any certainty are coal and nuclear power. In the real world, there is no feasible alternative in this time frame.

It seems to us that joint industry-government task forces are essential to make sure no important piece is omitted from this extraordinarily complex jigsaw puzzle. Prohibiting the participation of people with firsthand knowledge of the energy business and with years of experience in it can only produce the sort of Rube Goldberg energy program that has been debated on Capitol Hill the past 18 months or more.

The United States has the resource base, the work force, the technical skills, the management, and the organization to meet its future energy needs. Given realistic policies, including minimal regulation of the marketplace, industry can probably raise the huge amounts of capital required. In the last analysis, however, it will be the rate of return on capital—that is to say, the profitability—of the energy industries that will determine how much gets done.

We recognize the burden that higher-priced energy places on the economically deprived. To the extent that there is a serious adverse impact on the poor, government should deal with it directly—by subsidy to them if necessary—rather than by a general distortion of fuel prices. Arbitrary controls that delay the development of additional supplies will only aggravate the problems of the poor.

Unless we assure ourselves of the energy required to sustain the well-being of the American people, no arms or armament can assure the nation's security, nor can social programs of whatever sort assure its stability.

The question of whether there is a role for government in this answers itself: There is an essential, affirmative role for government—a role that, unfortunately, the government still seems unable to comprehend or unwilling to play. And this is the crux of America's energy problems.

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from the steep stairwells of the Washington Metro—built for congressional convenience, it seems—one for the Senate and one for the House. They still show up for work at the earliest of hours in Washington, slipping into their chairs before 8 a.m. and not leaving them until after dark. Their employers, the 95th Congress, went home a fortnight ago. But the halls of Congress, not so hallowed these days, are still jammed with the traffic of aides and assistants, barbers and shoe-shiners, and secretaries—so many of them—who keep on working when their bosses, the 515 men and 20 women members of Congress, are not here to watch them.

Let me make it clear at the outset: while congressional staffs are important—too important, too powerful, some say—the credit or blame for what happens here belongs with the elected ones, on whose shoulders blame has been heaped in large quantities these past few weeks. But this does not mean that these thousands of staffers simply perform mechanical tasks to ensure the proper passage or rejection of legislation. There are dozens of legislative aides, bill-writers and committee counsels whose duties might be said to provide them with that famous, dangerous intoxicant, power. But for every self-styled drunkard, there are dozens more who thirst in jobs that require little more than typing aptitude. The clerks make things *happen*, as in any bureaucracy, and since the 95th Congress adjourned they have been busy turning the lawmakers' late-night wrangles into law, while more powerful staff members lean back in their swivel chairs and spin.

One legislative measure in particular has required the special attention of dozens of congressional employees, and it illustrates the complex process by which a bill, once approved by the Senate and the House, becomes a law. Its official title is "HR 13511—To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 to reduce income taxes and for other purposes," but most people call it the tax bill, or the tax cut bill (though it's not much of a cut). The bill went through a series of complex changes in its final hours, through public and private deals that already have been discussed elsewhere. It is said that Russell Long, the Louisiana Democrat who chairs the Senate Finance Committee, is the only person who fully understands all the nuances of the tax bill. This is false. Sissy Bowman understands the tax bill. She is a clerical assistant on the Senate Finance Committee, and along with two others has been doing nothing else but answering telephone questions about the tax bill from a wide variety of callers. She estimated that the committee gets between 60 and 100 calls an hour seeking explanations of one amendment or another. A lot of the callers are tax lawyers and congressional staffers. Some are taxpayers who want to know what the legislative language means to them.

"Most of the calls are about the once-a-lifetime deal

for buying a house, the exemption you could get from capital gains taxes," Bowman says. "Most people don't know whether they qualify or not." That provision, she noted, has all the earmarks of being the most popular in the entire bill. Do she and her colleagues interpret law? "Oh, no, of course not. We just explain what the law *says*. We couldn't interpret it, you know." At which point she had to answer another phone call.

The law she was using for reference was not really law at that point. It wasn't even an official copy of the law, just a compilation of the various changes and amendments that came out of Congress's final late-night sessions. As each amendment is passed on the floor, the official reporter of the House or Senate turns the text over to the office of the Enrolling Clerk.

There, day and night, bills are typed up, collated and kept in an organized fashion so that no one actually forgets which amendments belong in the bill and between which pages they should be added. This process, known as engrossment, kept a number of people working late during the final nights of the 95th Congress. One of them was Wayne Fowler.

"Since this bill involved a conference, that means that there's conference work, and the conference report, and all that goes into the bill," explained Fowler, who is a House enrolling clerk. "The engrossment gets put together after each house gets through with it. Since this was a House measure, it came back here for final engrossment. Then we enroll it." Enrolling a bill is the most crucial, most complicated and the most risky part of the process. It's also fairly expensive, since all legislation is printed up on parchment paper, 11 by 14 inches. The tax bill ended up 184 pages long, shorter than the 1976 version, which was over 400 pages. In its final form, this year's bill stood four inches thick and weighed approximately six pounds.

Once the Government Printing Office completes the parchment process, the bill and xerox copies of it are sent around to various congressional offices for proofreading. The original is kept in the enrolling clerk's office, presumably so that no over-zealous staffer could perpetrate a change on the original, which, Fowler hastened to point out, "would of course be illegal." An historic footnote: the tax bill was the first piece of legislation in history to have been printed up through a computer typesetting process, commonly known as "cold type," which newspapers and magazines have been switching to in recent years. It saves money, requires less manpower and results in fewer errors—theoretically, at least. "We proofread the bill, find errors in it and send it back to the GPO for another version," Fowler said. "Then we check it again, and if there are more errors we return it again. We keep doing this until we get a perfect copy." The proofreaders include the counsel for the House Ways and Means Committee, where the bill originated, the enrolling clerks and the Committee on House Administration.

Vice President Mondale and House Speaker Tip O'Neill then enter the picture. Each, as head of his respective chamber, is required by law to sign every bill before it goes to the president. This is often not quite so easy to accomplish as it sounds. For example, President Carter had arranged to sign the Humphrey-Hawkins full employment bill a week ago Friday, but on Wednesday the enrolling clerks couldn't find anyone—Mondale, or the president pro tem of the Senate, James Eastland—to sign the bill. So a congressional staffer had to fly the bill out to Minnesota, where Mondale was busy campaigning, to get his signature, and then to Massachusetts, where Tip O'Neill lives, for his signature, then back to Washington. Usually things are not quite so complicated or expensive. Bill Smith, the vice president's congressional liaison on the hill, is quick to point out that the signature is a legal requirement, not an endorsement. "Mondale signs bills that the president vetoes," he said, "so obviously it doesn't mean anything."

Once the signatures have been collected, a staffer at the Committee on House Administration takes the parchment to his car and drives it down to the White House. Gene Romaniello was given the tax bill to take, and he delivered it to the White House records room "around lunchtime" on Tuesday. The president has 10

days from midnight on Tuesday to sign it. He says he will.

This procedure, aside from being arduous and time-consuming (it took the tax bill 16 days to make it down Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House), also keeps a lot of Capitol Hill employees too busy to relax; but not all. Walk into offices in the House and Senate Office Buildings, particularly in the late afternoon, and you'll find countless legislative assistants, secretaries and interns taking advantage of that handiest of government perks—the WATS line. There are 230 of them for House offices, and two lines connect to them in each congressional suite. Also, in cooperation with the General Services Administration and the executive branch, Congressmen and Senators have use of the FTS line from 5:00 p.m. until 9:00 a.m. FTS is an exclusive government hook-up that reaches anywhere in the continental United States. It is quite common to find people in congressional offices "working" late at night, but really making phone calls to friends. One legislative assistant to a Republican congressman has estimated that he saves \$10,000 a year in telephone bills, by using the WATS line. The money he saves just about pays his income tax.

David Blum



Carternomics

by Robert Lekachman

The omens are dismal for success of the administration's latest skirmish against inflation. In the wake of the president's October 24 speech, the dollar promptly dropped to new lows against the yen, the mark, the guilder, and other major currencies. It sank even against the British pound. Among the heavy sellers of the dollar were surely the treasurers of numerous American based multinationals. Wall Street celebrated by a resumption of the preceding week's plunge in the Dow Jones averages and the price of gold in London and Zurich, as though in advertisement of Harry Browne's latest advice to terrified investors, soared toward \$250 an ounce.

Domestic reaction might charitably be termed mixed. Highly qualified expressions of support came from the teamsters and the auto workers and the machinists' outspoken William Winpisinger promised to ignore the wage standard entirely. General Motors and Ford promised to cooperate if they could. Felix Rohatyn actually praised the president, but the Chamber of Commerce predictably complained that Mr. Carter had failed to attack big government, the root of all inflationary evil. Only the usual suspects displayed enthusiasm, among them Treasury Secretary Blumenthal who declared that Phase II would strengthen the dollar; Federal Reserve Chairman Miller, who termed the program "balanced"; Walter Heller, whose advice had been solicited in the formulation of the wage and price standards, and Senator Javits, a loyal supporter of all presidents.

Is Phase II a certain failure? Before suggesting an answer to this query, it is instructive to recall two episodes in which more or less voluntary income policies registered at least temporary and limited success. In 1961 Kennedy economists, well aware of their master's campaign promise to get the country moving again, quickly grappled with the design of a policy to reconcile rapid economic growth with the price stability which Eisenhower had purchased at the cost of three recessions in eight years. Their brainchild was the productivity guidelines which unions and large corporations were exhorted to heed. The White House meant business. In a spectacular display of presidential wrath, John Kennedy in the spring of 1962 compelled the major steel companies to withdraw a price hike in excess of the guideline figure. Nibbled at now and then,

the guidelines were generally observed until the middle of 1966 when the economy began to overheat as the joint consequence of Vietnam escalation and the rising expense of Great Society legislation. Still, the guidelines had played a role in the encouragement of a six year economic expansion accompanied by nearly stable prices.

Take a more recent, continuing English episode. For three years a Labour government has persuaded unions to accept limited wage gains, decreasing from 15 to five percent. At the start of this exercise, inflation was roaring away at a 24 percent annual figure and pundits were muttering darkly about the impending disintegration of British society and the danger, according to ideological taste, of revolt on the left or the right. Today's inflation rate is about the same as ours and in the last year the pound has risen in value against the dollar.

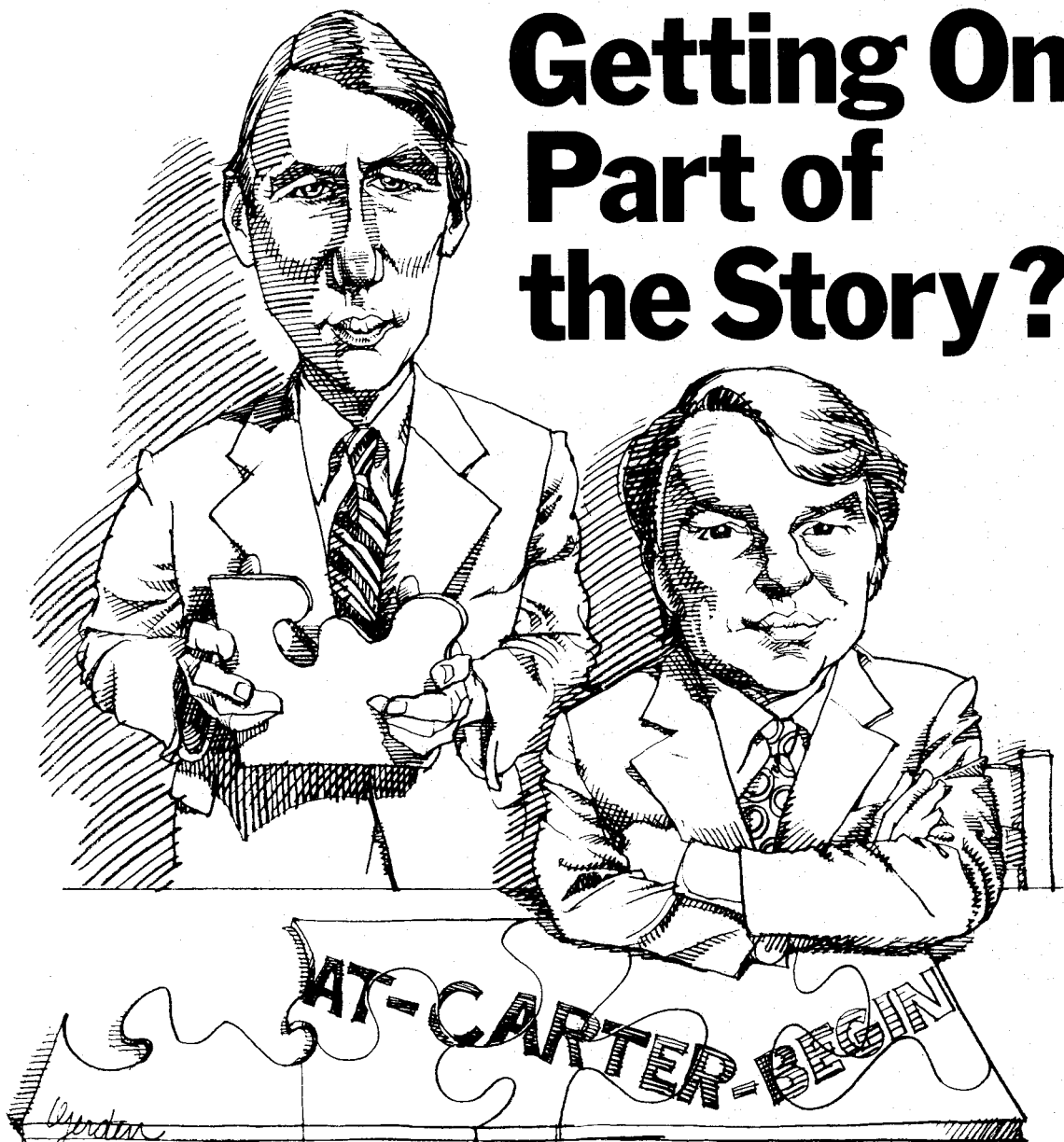
The two examples are instructive but not terribly encouraging to Mr. Carter and his new anti-inflation czar, Alfred Kahn, celebrated in Washington as the man who restored competition to the airlines. Several favoring circumstances, absent in 1978, accompanied the Kennedy-Johnson experiment. Restraint was applied at the start of recovery from a mild recession. Inflationary expectations had been effectively squelched by Eisenhower deflation. Firm and credible presidential leadership was available. President Kennedy's open threats of grand jury investigations, contract diversion, IRS tax audits, and other dire reprisals against contumacious steel monguls left something to be desired according to the stricter canons of the ACLU, but they eloquently testified to the determination of the president and his brother, the attorney-general. Until Vietnam destroyed his presidency, Lyndon Johnson was a masterful chief executive whose powers of persuasion and sheer bullying were awesome.

English success has been facilitated by the spectre of runaway inflation, as terrifying to unions and their members as to the public at large. Prime Minister Callaghan is an adroit politician in whom unions appear to repose as much confidence as they are prepared to confer on any public official. Wage restraint has been accompanied by checks on other forms of income and the continuation of cherished social programs.

Mr. Carter's chances of success are smaller because today's economic landscape is very different from that to which Kennedy and Callaghan responded. Inflation may be accelerating. At best it is stabilizing at an

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unacceptably large eight percent figure. Our elderly business cycle expansion will probably fizzle out of its own accord in the next six or 12 months, even if Federal Reserve policy does not prematurely end it sooner. Though high, our inflation gives no evidence of replicating British rates before wage restraint shrank them. In other words, recent American experience has been inflationary enough to generate public anticipation of more of the same, but not wild enough to create the sort of emergency which mobilizes the public behind any presidential policy. Finally, Mr. Carter himself, though in notably better political health than he was even two months ago, is no John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, or James Callaghan.

What about the program itself? As aptly capsulized by CBS's George Herman, enforcement will rely upon "publicity, purchasing, and privileges." Corporate and union offenders will be scolded. Government contractors, seeking orders in excess of \$5 million, must certify their compliance with the price standard on pain of exclusion from bidding. In reprisal for inflationary conduct, import protections against foreign rivals may be relaxed. These are not very powerful sanctions. Two thirds of government contracts over \$5 million each are for defense items, many of them produced by only one source. Unions as well as corporations will scream the first time Mr. Carter threatens jobs by letting in more Japanese and German products.

The price standard reaffirms with minor variations earlier emphasis upon gradual deceleration. Sellers are urged to raise their charges at most by half a percent less than their average increase during 1976 and 1977, but in no instance by more than 9.5 per cent. Administration statisticians believe that the price standard, if generally heeded, will reduce general inflation to the neighborhood of six percent. Since the cost of living in the last month has been rising at a 9.6 percent annual rate, six percent would be an obvious improvement.

The wage standard includes fringes, a change from past practices unapplauded by unions. If the teamsters do settle in March for the seven percent standard, it is safe to predict that some creative reinterpretation either of the fringes or of the benefits of some productivity deal will have been accomplished by all parties. Exempted from the standard are the 26 percent of the labor force who earn less than \$4 per hour. The few workers who enjoy full cost-of-living indexing (uncapped COLAs) will reap a minor windfall if inflation exceeds seven percent. Since their contract is in compliance with the pay standard, they will also get the tax rebate in the event of inflation higher than seven percent, that other workers receive.

By all odds, the tax rebate is the most novel and potentially the most promising element in the administration scheme. Responding to legitimate union fears that apparent gains in multi-year contracts will be eroded by inflation, Carter promises, Congress willing,

to rebate the difference between seven percent and the same period's inflation rate. If the AFL-CIO in the end cooperates, the tax rebate may be the most important reason they do so.

Phase II contains an inherent paradox. In his speech, the president paid the usual homage to free enterprise and the magical properties of inflation. He alluded also to concentrated economic power, warned the 400 American corporations whose annual sales exceed \$500 million that their behavior would be monitored, and promised an appropriate distribution of rewards and penalties. Evidently the word "voluntary" demands a quantity of exegesis. Quite probably the course of Phase II will depend upon the seriousness with which major corporations take the potential sanctions. If federal contracts are lost, import quotas dismantled, and steel trigger prices revoked, just conceivably the price standard will hold and labor unions accordingly will be encouraged to adhere to parallel wage moderation.

If the standards collapse, the already high probability of recession, mandatory controls (or both) will approach certainty. Even now, the upward creep of the prime interest rate, the 10 percent home mortgages in vogue in much of the country, and the signs of further Federal Reserve credit tightening, all operate to threaten recession.

On the theme of mandatory controls, the president appears to have painted himself into a corner. It is always inadvisable to cry "No, Never" to a policy which one once supported and to which one might soon have to revert. In October, according to the Harris poll, the public favored compulsory wage and price controls by a 58-35 percent margin, up from September's 52-42 percent. Not for the first time, the public demonstrates a tighter grip on economic reality than most economists and politicians.

In themselves the wage and price standards, though more complicated and leaky than early administration advertisements promised, seem realistic in design and objective and, with the embellishment of tax rebates, less inequitable for workers than most controls programs usually turn out to be. It is the remainder of the Carter program which should set firebells ringing in the night. If not quite Proposition 13, it is a first cousin. Reduction of the federal deficit to \$30 billion or less is sensible economics only on the assumption that expansion continues. Otherwise it guarantees further increases of unemployment, still hanging at six percent in the latter stages of a long upswing. Shrinkage of the federal share of Gross National Product from 23 to 21 percent is the worst imaginable news for partisans of national health, urban restoration, welfare reform, and job programs. If his words are to be taken literally, the president has just repealed the domestic half of the 1976 Democratic national platform.

If possible, environmentalists have still more occa-

sion for concern. The president's promise (threat?) to turn the cost-benefit analysts loose on new and existing health and safety regulations registers a victory for the Charles Schultze-Barry Bosworth combine over Labor Secretary Ray Marshall and the Environmental Protection Administration and its allies. On the president's lips, the holy war against inflation sounds like a convenient excuse for relaxing OSHA protections of workers against job hazards, product reliability criteria, auto emission standards, and air and water improvements.

Thus the most distressing aspect of Phase II is the administration's wholesale adoption of traditional conservative rhetoric on government spending, regulation, deficits, and the role of free markets. Republican outrage beyond the required political rituals is no doubt related to this wholesale theft of the Grand Old Party's ideological wardrobe. Phase II at best is unlikely to succeed. But the most disastrous of outcomes will be failure to restrain prices and success in stalling social programs, dismantling essential consumer, worker, and public protections, and precipitating a new recession.

I have favored readers of this journal more than once with my belief that mandatory controls are the appropriate response to present exigencies. I find myself hoping this grim autumn that Phase II will work, for the likelihood is that by the time Mr. Carter is compelled to seek congressional authority to regulate prices and wages, the drift of the economy toward recession will be irreversible. If that recession approximates the gravity of the 1974-5 episode, general unemployment will climb to 11 percent, black unemployment to twice that figure, and teenage and female joblessness to rates even more sickening than present figures.

I wish the president and ourselves luck. He and we will need it.

White House Watch

Inflation Scramble

Before last July 20, the day when a memo from Secretary of Labor Ray Marshall set the President's cabinet-level Economic Policy Group on the way toward the voluntary anti-inflation program that Carter announced on October 24, the drudges doing most of the official worrying and thinking about inflation were concentrating on possible tax incentives and penalties that Congress might or might not be asked to authorize in early 1979. The tendency was to drift along with the wage and price deceleration

campaign, aimed at persuading employers and workers to hold price and wage increases slightly below the average levels of the past three years, that the President launched with fanfare in April and that his all-purpose counsellor and jawboner, Robert Strauss, had been promoting with indifferent success since then. Plans, attitudes and concerns about inflation began to change soon after July 20, but not as rapidly and drastically as some of Carter's economic and anti-inflation thinkers and architects like to imagine now. The process of change from something near somnolence to real alarm and frantic search for credible solutions was slow. It entailed strong and usually concealed controversies. And it was revealing of the way presidencies—the Carter presidency in this instance, of course, but the story would be much the same for any administration—awake and respond to crises and pressures of the kind that inflation on the current scale generates.

Here, in order to make what follows coherent, we pause for agency identification. The Economic Policy Group technically encompasses the entire Cabinet and is a sham. Its functioning core is a steering committee composed of EPG's chairman, Secretary of the Treasury Michael Blumenthal, budget director James T. McIntyre, Jr., Charles Schultze, chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers; domestic policy adviser Stuart Eizenstat, and national security assistant Zbigniew Brzezinski or his deputy for economics, Henry Owen. After the anti-inflation study intensified, Secretary Marshall and Secretary of Commerce Juanita Kreps were added to the committee. Barry Bosworth, the young staff director of the Council of Wage and Price Stability, an adjunct of the Council of Economic Advisers, attends the EPG committee meetings and to all effects is a member. CWPS is to administer the new anti-inflation program. It endures the acronyms of COWPS and CWEENPS (this reporter's contribution) and it also is a sham. It has never met as a council since former President Gerald Ford founded it. Like the defunct White House Domestic Council was before it was mercifully put away, CWEENPS's only purpose has been to provide a home and legitimacy for staff. Bosworth has urged its new chairman, anti-inflation commander Alfred Kahn, to bring the council to life and actually convene it once in a while, on the theory that it can provide an institutional base that Kahn otherwise will lack. It has been expanded by the additions of Strauss and Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland and modernized by the first formal recognition that one of its members, budget director Bert Lance, is no longer among those present and was replaced a year ago by McIntyre. The enormous effort that went into the evolution of the anti-inflation program has also involved such essential, usually unnoticed and handsomely paid slaves as Bosworth's deputy, economist Robert Russell; Si Lazarus and Mary Schuman, deregulation specialists

on Eizenstat's domestic policy staff; Robert Ginsburg, its associate director for economics; and Curt Hessler, Blumenthal's executive assistant and the EPG committee's staff secretary. These people and many others like them are generally young, capable, tireless, loyal to Carter and perhaps the best among his best.

Ray Marshall proposed in his July 20 memo to the EPG that wage and price guidelines of the sort that had been tried without much effect by Johnson and Nixon be revived and applied to the current inflation problem, with a vital difference. The difference was that the guidelines be supplemented with federal sanctions and pressures short of mandatory controls but nevertheless likely to encourage, if not require, compliance by major employers and unions. It's said at the White House and Treasury that the suggestion served immediately to focus attention on the possibility that something more and better than the Carter-Strauss "deceleration" show might be required sooner than next January, the target date for completion of the studies of possible tax sanctions and rewards that the EPG members' deputies were mulling. Prospective administrative and other difficulties with the tax measures had already dulled enthusiasm for them. The EPG deputies, assistant secretaries or the equivalents, were ordered to halt that study and review. Marshall's suggestion.

A deep-seated distrust of guidelines persisted. Jawboning unencumbered by unenforced specifics was preferred by all except those who believed that nothing except mandatory controls would work. These hardliners were not deterred by past evidence, the latest from Nixon's 1971 controls and their aftermath, exploding price and wage levels, that mandatory regulation wouldn't work very well or for very long. EPG's chairman, Blumenthal, went through a typical cycle. He remained opposed to guidelines, as he had always been, until a severe slide in the dollar on foreign exchanges shook him in mid-August. He then swung to support of Marshall's proposal, with important additions. It would have to be supplemented, he argued, with something more than the proposed federal sanctions. It would have to be accompanied by positive government actions—among them a severely reduced federal budget, curtailed federal hiring and pay, some sort of curb on the economic costs of environmental and other social requirements—that would identify the federal government as a partner with private enterprise in risks and sacrifices intended to halt or moderate inflation. After that, from mid-August to late September, everybody involved got really serious. All but two of the chief elements of the eventual Carter program were in place by October 1. On October 2 the various staffs were ordered to be prepared to come up within 48 hours with a finished program ready for announcement by Carter. The TV networks were warned that they might be asked for prime night time

on October 17, then on October 19 and at last on October 24.

The delays were fortunate. The additional time they provided made possible two substantive additions to the program and the resolution of a dispute that Carter settled hours before he went on the air. Weak and insufficient though the program was widely and perhaps fatally judged to be, it would have been much weaker without the additions and the hard budget line Carter adopted at the very end.

The additions were the "real wage insurance" proposal and the provision for central monitoring and presidential review of regulations that may increase private costs and thus have an inflationary impact. Charles Schultze and Barry Bosworth borrowed the wage insurance idea from economists Arthur Okun and Henry Wallich. Bosworth raised it in December 1977 during the discussions that preceded the deceleration phase and again it urged it upon Schultze when the new program was being formulated. Schultze proposed it to the EPG, let it drop, and then revised and pressed it at the instance of Stuart Eizenstat.

Eizenstat, Schultze and budget director McIntyre figured largely in the discussion and controversy that led to the central review and control of federal regulations. Carter instituted the beginnings of it last March with an executive order providing selective, limited White House review of sample regulations before they are issued. In the Council of Economic Advisers, in the CREEPS staff, at the White House, and especially in McIntyre's Office of Management and Budget, the belief that uncontrolled and unbridled federal regulation of everything from rail and truck freight rates to environmental pollution and help for the handicapped was adding intolerably to private costs had been growing and hardening. McIntyre and one of his deputies, Bowman Cutter, seized upon the upcoming anti-inflation program as a vehicle for getting at regulatory proliferation. They recommended that OMB, probably in the person of a deputy director, be empowered to review *all* new regulations proposed and issued by the so-called "dependent agencies," a marvellous term that distinguishes separate agencies and departmental bureaus in the executive branch from such "independent agencies" as the Federal Trade Commission, the Federal Communications Commission and their many kin. Eizenstat and Schultze foresaw that the affected "dependent agencies" would see in the OMB proposal an attempt to put cost ahead of social needs, especially in the environmental health and similar areas, and would raise hell. Eizenstat nevertheless summoned representatives of all the "dependent" regulators and some of the independents to a meeting at the White House on October 16.

The expected hell was raised. The leading hell raiser was Barbara Blum, an original Carter Georgian who is deputy administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. At the meeting and afterward, she mobilized

support for a compromise that she devised, Eizenstat and Schultze sold without difficulty to McIntyre and Cutter, and the President adopted. The agencies are to submit their proposed regulations to a new Regulatory Council which Barbara Blum's boss, EPA Administrator Douglas Costle, will head during its first year. OMB, acting for the President, retains important powers of final review. But the dependents and any independent regulators that choose to join the process will participate in it and, though still suspicious, they find it more acceptable than the original OMB proposal. Eizenstat and others at the White House and OMB see in the new system, with its centralized correlation and review of much—though far from all—federal regulation, a reform that in time will equal in importance the consolidation of the federal budget process in 1921. Whatever may happen to the latest anti-inflation effort, the system of central regulatory review should outlast it.

An even more intense and much more prolonged dispute concerned the budgetary targets that the President would announce and the form his announcement would take. Blumenthal and McIntyre, two of the principal disputants, agreed from the start of serious discussion in August that the President should commit himself to the lowest feasible and attainable level for the fiscal 1980 budget. Blumenthal argued throughout for public commitment to an anticipated deficit on the order of \$30 billion. McIntyre, who was pressing for maximum budgetary restraint before the new anti-inflation program was thought of, preferred that the public commitment be in more general terms—for example, to a deficit half or if possible less than half the \$66 billion deficit in the Ford budget that Carter inherited. Eizenstat, Schultze and most other White House advisers agreed in general with that approach. At a Cabinet meeting the day of his inflation speech, Carter said he intended to make a generalized commitment without tying himself and his budgeteers to a specific public figure. His unpublicized, actual "internal" target, he said, would be Blumenthal's "\$30 billion or less." After the Cabinet meeting, Carter met with congressional leaders. They insisted that an implied \$33 billion deficit target would not be low enough and that he should go for \$30 billion or even less. The speech draft on Carter's Teleprompter had him saying "I plan to reduce the budget deficit to less than one half of what it was when I ran for office." After his meeting with the leaders, he added after a dash mark—"to \$30 billion or less."

Much discussion but less dispute preceded the President's undertaking to punish federal suppliers who exceed the guidelines with the denial of federal business. One would think that annual federal procurement of something like \$80 billion worth of goods and services from private suppliers would confer enormous market power on the government. The usable power is not all that enormous, it's spotty, and the legality of

using it is in doubt. Justice department and other lawyers consulted by OMB said the power to punish violators by the denial of federal contracts will surely be questioned in the courts. There is a good chance of sustaining the government position if threatened suppliers are assured full hearings and if the data on which complaints and action are based is sound. Assuming legality, the sanction will be effective only when the government buys a substantial portion of the products involved. In many instances volumes that seem huge are a few percent of the total market. Much of the defense-connected technology and equipment that constitute a large fraction of federal purchases come from suppliers who are the only sources of essential items. McIntyre, Bowman Cutter and other OMB officials insisted that the limitations on the procurement power be made clear to the President and be understood by him. He said he understood and wanted to include it anyhow. He needed it and everything else he could lay hands on to lend substance to his program.

John Osborne

Courting recession
to spur the inevitable.

Dollar Bounce

It has been a steady and, to many people, a disconcerting refrain: "The dollar hit record lows on European and Japanese money markets again today . . ." "The price of gold went up again yesterday, as money traders continued selling dollars . . ." "The Japanese yen and the German mark reached new highs against the dollar today . . ." Ordinary citizens no doubt have been troubled by a seeming collapse of their currency, and some of them may be wondering if it portends a collapse of their economy or even of America's leadership role in the world. I would stress that a strong economy does not necessarily have a high valued currency, nor does a strong currency always signify a strong economy. The causes of the dollar's decline are complex; its effects are confusing and it is not entirely clear what should be done about it. Yet dollar fluctuations are not unprecedented; to the contrary, the rule in money trading seems to be that whatever goes down must come up, and vice versa. By every indication of past performance, it is now time for betting in favor of the dollar again, instead of against it. In fact, we may have begun seeing the dollar bounce back *before* the Carter administration intervened in international money markets last week.

To begin understanding what has been happening in

foreign exchange markets, one should recall that since March 1973 the major currencies of the world have been floating in relation to one another. In contrast to the exchange rate system that prevailed from the end of World War II until 1973, governments in the larger countries no longer fix their exchange rates and attempt to maintain them by buying and selling currencies. That earlier arrangement, the so-called Bretton Woods system, came under increasing strain in the late 1960s and early 1970s, giving rise to frequent international monetary crises.

Following the abandonment of fixed exchange rates, the dollar went through three cycles, each downward movement being followed by an upswing. Then, for the two years from the autumn of 1975 to the autumn of 1977, the dollar was quite stable as measured against an average of the currency values of the other major industrial countries. And this stability was at a level slightly higher than when floating started. Beginning in September 1977, another downswing got under way and, except for a reversal in the spring of this year, it has continued until the past week.

Just as the dollar has not been the victim of one steady, uninterrupted decline, the extent of its drop has not been as great as news reports might indicate. An exchange rate is the price of a currency in terms of other currencies. Since there are as many currencies as there are nations, no clear-cut and unequivocal measure exists of the value of any one currency. Should it be valued against all other currencies, against those of the larger countries, or simply against the dollar? The dollar, we should remember, is not just the currency of the United States of America, but it is also a world money. It is held in reserve by other countries, and used as a standard of value of other currencies. Each day when the newspapers tell us about a shift in the value of the dollar, they are also reporting on shifts in the value of other currencies—the German mark, the Japanese yen, the French franc, etc.—*measured in dollars*. During the past year, the dollar value of the Swiss franc has gone up about 50 percent, the yen, 45 percent, the mark, 28 percent and the French franc, 17 percent.

This practice is misleading. Valuing the mark, the yen and the other currencies only in relation to the dollar exaggerates their upward movement and the dollar's decline. Germany and Japan do not trade only with the United States, but with many other countries as well. To get a truer picture of the upward movement of other currencies and the downward movement of the dollar, it is necessary to take an average of the value of each currency against the currencies of at least its major trading partners.

By all measures, though, the value of the dollar has fallen in the past year. According to a Federal Reserve weighted average, the dollar depreciated 16 percent from late September 1977 to mid-October 1978 against the currencies of 10 industrial countries. These 10

countries account for about half of world trade, and it's important to note that the dollar's decline against them has been considerably smaller than the 50 percent or 45 percent recorded against the Swiss franc and the yen. If the dollar is measured against *all* countries and not just these 10, the depreciation over the last year is even smaller.

The causes of the dollar's depreciation are not easy to pin down. In fact, over the past year, public commentary has shifted from one cause to another. A year ago, much stress was placed on American oil imports, which increased \$10 billion in 1977 and accounted for about one half of the enlargement of the US trade deficit for that year. US oil imports are no longer increasing, and lately attention has focused on two other explanations for the dollar's decline.

One is the difference in economic performance between the US and the other industrial countries. In 1977, recovery from the recession of 1975 faltered in Europe and Japan, which are important markets for US exports. In fact, for a while in 1977, industrial production was actually declining in these countries. Meanwhile, the American economy continued to expand at a vigorous pace. The result was that the US "sucked in" imports faster than its trading partners took in US exports. Now things are changing. It's expected that economic activity will accelerate in Europe and Japan while it slows down somewhat here. This should lead to faster expansion in US exports and a slower increase in imports. In fact, this is already happening, as US trade statistics for recent months show. But the contraction of the US trade deficit and of the broader measures of US transactions, the balance on current account—which includes not only merchandise trade but purchases and sales of services, travel and income on foreign investments—has not yet affected foreign exchange rates as one normally would expect. Puzzlingly, the dollar has continued to fall.

Currently, the most popular explanation for the continued decline of the dollar has been the worsening of inflation in the United States. However, it is difficult to believe that the small increase in US inflation could account for the very large movement in the exchange rate between the dollar and the yen or the dollar and the Swiss franc.

What does explain the movement? To understand it, we have to look not only at what is happening in and to the US economy, but at what is happening abroad. Largely as a result of its slow economic expansion, Japan has developed an enormous surplus in its trade and current account balances. Its imports have increased slowly because of its sluggish economy. Its producers, facing slack demand at home, have actively sought to sell abroad. As a result, Japan is expected to have a current account surplus of \$15 or \$20 billion this year. This extraordinarily large surplus is not matched by an outflow of private capital from Japan, and the result is an upward movement of the yen. Much the

same thing has happened in Switzerland and, on a smaller scale, in Germany.

We can conclude from this is that the dollar decline is only part of a larger world currency story. In part, the decline is a reflection of upward pressures on other currencies, just as the large trade deficit in the United States is the counterpart of the large trade surpluses of those countries. Some of the underlying causes of the dollar decline, such as US inflation, reflect weaknesses in the American economy, but others, such as lagging growth abroad, reflect comparative US strength. In any event, perceptions of the trade deficit and inflation have created expectations of a weak dollar, and in foreign exchange markets, as in the stock market, expectations become self-fulfilling.

If the causes of the exchange rate movement are mixed, one result is certainly bad for us: import prices have increased and have aggravated our inflation. And not only are imports more expensive (not to mention travel in Japan and Europe), but increases in prices of import commodities lead American producers of similar items to raise their prices, too. There should be a brighter day coming, however. A depreciated dollar, coupled with more rapid economic growth in Europe and Japan, should result in increased US exports, correction of the US balance of payments deficit and stability for the dollar.

Sometimes it is said that the dollar's decline has a depressive influence on other economies by reducing their exports. But in fact, other countries have been relying too heavily on exports and not enough on domestic consumption. This point appears to have been agreed upon at the recent annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund in Washington. The prospect for more expansive policies in Europe and Japan led to optimistic pronouncements at that meeting concerning a reduction of international imbalances and a stabilization of exchange rates.

There is every reason to expect that the dollar's plunge will stop, but what should we do to make sure? Apart from urging other countries to pursue sensible (that is to say, expansionist) policies, we ought to do things we should be doing even if we didn't have a dollar problem. That is, we ought to conserve energy and we ought to deal with inflation. On both fronts, there has been some progress recently. The energy bill passed by Congress probably isn't all that it should be, but it is a start. Even before the bill was passed, US oil consumption had begun to taper off. President Carter's inflation program has opened to better reviews than one might have expected, and one can only hope that it will succeed.

To the extent that world money traders lack confidence in the US energy program and the anti-inflation policy, they will continue betting for a while against the dollar, and it will continue to fall. But this can not and will not continue indefinitely. The underlying realities of the world economy will take

hold, and those realities are that US energy consumption is slowing and US inflation is not running out of control. Meanwhile, other economies are moving into higher gear. The result will be a strengthening of the dollar, particularly against those few currencies that have been moving up sharply.

If there is a single lesson in all this, it is that it takes two to tango. The dollar problem is not purely an American problem. It reflects the interaction between the American economy and the economies of other countries. The leaders of other countries may find it politically convenient to blame the United States for some of their domestic problems, but unless they deal with their own problems—by improving the domestic performance of their own economies—the yen problem, the mark problem and the Swiss franc problem will be prolonged. And for as long as it lasts, it will continue to be labelled, incorrectly, as a dollar problem.

On November 1 the Federal Reserve and the Treasury, acting at the request of the president, announced a series of measures designed to strengthen the dollar. The Federal Reserve is increasing the discount rate and is imposing a supplementary reserve requirement of two percent on large time deposits. The latter measure will inhibit banks from issuing certificates of deposits, an important source of funds for lending. Along with further increases in interest rates that will result from the discount rate hike, this will tend to slow expansion of the US economy. It would strengthen the dollar, but it could also cause recession in the United States.

The other measures include a step-up in the Treasury's monthly gold sales to 1.5 billion ounces (about \$4.3 billion per year at the current price) and various means of mobilizing foreign currencies. These steps are designed to persuade money traders that the US government is prepared to intervene heavily, selling gold and currencies, and buying dollars, to increase the value of the dollar.

Two observations may be made about these actions. First, the dollar strengthened significantly on the day before the announcement. It may have come just as the markets were turning around anyway. If that is so, little of the newly-mobilized resources will have to be used. Second, the fundamentals set forth earlier in this article still apply. Unless other countries' economic policies are directed toward reducing their large balance of payments surpluses, no amount of intervention in foreign exchange markets by the United States will have a lasting effect on exchange rates.

Robert Solomon

Robert Solomon is a senior fellow at The Brookings Institution and author of *The International Monetary System 1945-1976: An Insider's View* (Harper & Row).

It's all a conspiracy of Jews, Maoists and Masons.

How Russia Sees US Politics

by Robert Herr

Moscow

The average Soviet citizen has a terrible understanding of politics in the United States. If American visitors speak the language, their conversations with Russians—or at least their first ones—are likely to follow a familiar pattern. First there is the shock—even in Moscow—when the Russian hears that the foreigner has come all the way from “Amerika.” Then there follows a series of questions that rarely changes from one Russian to the next. The first question always is: which country is better, mine or yours? The American will attempt to reply diplomatically, explaining that he can see advantages and disadvantages to both societies but still prefers his own. More often than not, this answer will not do; the Russian is looking for the simple answer that the Soviet Union is, of course, better. What about the treatment of blacks in America? Again, the American will explain that the issue has two sides. Now the Russian will become visibly impatient and deliver his knockout punch: What about unemployment? The famous kitchen debate, begun when Nixon and Khrushchev met in 1959 and repeated endlessly ever since, is sure to ensue. The Russian will rarely have heard of the welfare system in the United States, imagining instead that once an American worker loses his job he simply stands on the sidewalk and starves. If the American mentions his country's high wages, the Russian will begin pressing for details on the price of a pound of potatoes or a new automobile. Soon the American will realize that the two economies simply cannot be compared, and will halt the discussion with his version of the knockout punch: If the United States is so bad and the Soviet Union so good, why can't you travel to America and see its conditions for yourself?

The small number of Soviet citizens who really do visit the US might observe that the average American knows just as little about the Soviet Union as the Russians do about America. But there is a striking difference in the middle stratum, between the professional specialist and the average citizen. In the United States, it is possible for an amateur to become reasonably well informed of life in the Soviet Union without turning into a Sovietologist. Perhaps he has taken a course on Russia while in college; perhaps he

has read books like Robert Kaiser's *Russia* or Hedrick Smith's *The Russians*; perhaps he simply follows the newspapers.

It is a different story in Moscow. There are a few Soviet books on contemporary America, such as one by the *Pravda* journalist Zorin, and the television program “Time” occasionally reports on the current problems plaguing American capitalism. But on the whole the Soviet non-specialist can hardly understand America the way Americans perceive the Soviet Union. Access to news from the West is severely limited, and whatever information does penetrate must pass through the Leninist filter before it reaches the citizen.

I found a good illustration of this problem when I attended an evening lecture at Moscow State University entitled, “The Pre-Election Campaign in the USA.” Several years ago I wondered what people in the Soviet Union thought of the Watergate scandal, and now I was curious to see how Russians viewed domestic affairs in America. The lecture illustrated “the middle stratum” of Soviet understanding of America: the lecturer was not a full-time specialist at the Institute of USA and Canada but an informed amateur, an editor of the journal *Man and Law* who has written a few books on international affairs. A large audience filled the auditorium, mostly undergraduates but many middle-aged men and women as well. After speaking for more than an hour the lecturer fielded about 15 questions from the audience. No television or newspaper reporter was present, the discussion after the lecture was animated, and in general it seemed a candid display of Soviet public opinion on the United States.

The lecturer began by announcing that he would not discuss the November elections *per se* but rather would consider the popularity of President Carter midway through his term and the various challengers he might have to face in 1980. (In some ways it seemed that he simply did not know enough about the November elections to be able to discuss them. After the talk I submitted a question—in writing, as were all the other questions, so he did not know it came from an American—on what he thought the consequences of Proposition 13 might be in the forthcoming elections. Apparently he did not recognize the issue. He stumbled over the phrase, “Proposition 13,” then paused and glanced at the ceiling, then announced that he would

Robert Herr is the pseudonym of an American living in Moscow.

not discuss this question since his time had just run out.)

President Carter, according to the lecturer, has failed to satisfy the desires of the "ruling capitalists and imperialists," and a strong possibility exists that he will not remain in office for a second term. Dissatisfaction with Carter is on the rise because of several contradictions in American politics. The United States is allied with Israel but dependent on the Arab nations for her oil. She is seeking to prevent an economic crisis through cooperation with other countries and through an expansion of the arms industry, but her resistance to Soviet efforts at detente could only lead to an international crisis. Quoting American newspapers, the lecturer then offered an explanation for the public's disillusionment with Carter. In the beginning of his term, he said, Carter promised too much and led Americans to believe that a "Golden Era" of honest and efficient administration would dawn; had the president promised less, Americans would have been more satisfied.

Following his assumption that "a more active leader of the ruling classes" will enter the White House in 1980, the lecturer then ran off a list of possible candidates for the throne. (Although the Camp David talks had ended two weeks earlier, he seemed unaware of Carter's new popularity in America, or that presidents traditionally fall into a slump midway through their terms.) The strongest candidate, he said, is Edward Kennedy. Popularity polls in America show him far ahead of Carter among Democrats, even in the South. Senators Moynihan and Jackson might also present a threat. On the Republican ticket Ronald Reagan leads the "right reaction," although the young Congressman Crane might inherit his position should Reagan prove too old to run. Nevertheless, Gerald Ford leads Reagan in polls among Republicans, and there is always the possibility of Richard Nixon's return.

The mention of Nixon's possible revival suggested two basic themes that underlay the lecturer's image of American politics. The first idea concerns the basic mechanism of American politics—namely, conspiracies. Early in his discussion the lecturer mentioned the renewed investigation into the assassination of President Kennedy. The FBI and the Senate, he said, are trying to emphasize Oswald's stay in Minsk and his connections with Communism; but the truth of the matter is that Zionists entered into the conspiracy because they were mad at Kennedy for failing to drive Communism from Cuba. And Richard Nixon may re-emerge because he is a "disciplined tool of the people who placed him in power and who took him out."

The manipulators behind Nixon's political career represent the lecturer's second assumption about American politics—that Zionists are behind all political conspiracies in the United States. In fact, anti-Semitic comments were thrown around so easily during the lecture that it was not hard to imagine that the talk was taking place not in Moscow in 1978, but in Berlin in

1936. The lecturer directed the audience's attention to the difficulties of Governor Carey: New York is the most Jewish state in the US, New York City is the most Jewish city in the world, and what happens there will determine the future direction of American politics.

Zionists, it turns out, are the people who pull the strings of the "disciplined" Nixon. As proof of this, the lecturer presented the following series of facts: Henry Kissinger suggested to the president that he begin spying on Democrats in the Watergate; the Zionist-controlled press hounded Nixon out of office; Nixon obediently maintained silence for the first years out of office, but has now recovered himself to the point that he can offer public criticism of Carter; yet (this is the clincher) Nixon is quiet on the power of Zionists to determine US policy. Can all of this be a mere coincidence?

The audience seemed pleased with this depiction of conspiracy and Zionism behind American politics, and provided questions attesting to their agreement. The first question, instead of addressing the elections in the US, asked about the role of Zionists in the assassination of Aldo Moro. The lecturer admitted he still didn't know all the details, but felt certain that Kissinger ("and also the Masons; they are important, too") played a role in the assassination. Then a question about the two Soviet diplomats arrested in New Jersey—the lecturer knew that they fell victims to American provocation.

After a question on China—no, China is sly, she will not play into the hands of the West—someone asked about the "Zionist-Maoist" conspiracy behind the human rights campaign. This was when the lecturer became most candid. It is already clear, he maintained, that Zionists cooperated with Hitler, and they are willing to deal with anyone as long as it serves their interests. With a touch of pride, he referred to a book that might be useful if anyone wanted to research this issue: "I myself co-authored a book recently on the Zionist falsification of the history of the Second World War, and among other things I unmasked the Zionist myth of the six million victims."

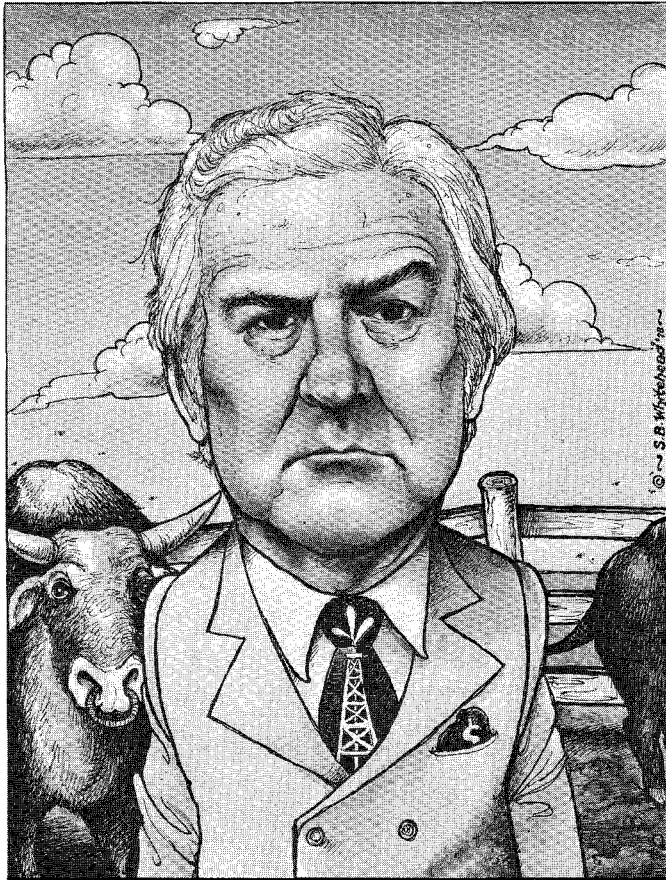
And so it went, still more questions about Zionists and conspiracies, still more replies about Jews, Maoists and even Masons. After the question-answer period ended (once I asked about the significance of Proposition 13), a small crowd gathered around the podium to discuss the lecturer's comments. Three people persisted in asking the lecturer about Palestinians—who are they, how do they differ from other Arabs, where do they live? Finally they asked for reference books, and someone from the crowd suggested *The Great Soviet Encyclopedia*. No, replied the lecturer, that encyclopedia has many errors, I do not advise you to consult it on the Palestinian issue.

A man behind me started to laugh. "Aha, and I know why. The Zionists have even taken over the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*!"

Tribune of the Corporate State

by Stephen Chapman

"Every cabinet should have at least one potential president in it," lamented Richard Nixon to John Ehrlichman in the fall of 1970. "Mine doesn't." Within weeks Nixon had corrected that defect: he appointed John Connally as Secretary of the Treasury. Since then Connally's association with Nixon and the Republican Party have become so close that it is hard to remember the stunning impact the announcement had on



John Connally

drawing by Samuel B. Whitehead

December 14, 1970. Connally was one of the leading figures in the Democratic Party, a protege of Lyndon Johnson, a three-term governor of Texas. The appointment would be roughly comparable to President Carter's putting, say, Howard Baker or John Tower in his cabinet.

In one stroke, Nixon strengthened the bipartisan appeal of his economic programs, laid the groundwork for heavy Republican inroads in the South in the 1972 presidential election, and perhaps most important,

opened the way to a Connally presidential candidacy.

Nixon saw in Connally the stuff of presidents—the stuff he looked wishfully for in himself—and nothing in what became a close relationship with the tall, dynamic Texan ever gave him any reason for doubt. From all accounts, Nixon was mesmerized by Connally's quick, facile mind and forceful manner. Connally also had a knack for telling the president what he wanted to hear. When Nixon was considering whether to mine Haiphong harbor and escalate the bombing of North Vietnam, Connally sent word: "Most important—the President must not lose the war! . . . He's got to show his guts and leadership on this one. Caution be damned . . ." Nixon noted in his memoirs that when he unleashed the Christmas bombing of Hanoi in 1972, "one of my strongest supporters was John Connally, who called daily to report some new and positive sampling of public opinion." Nixon twice wanted Connally as his vice president, first as a replacement for Spiro Agnew on the 1972 ticket and then again when Agnew resigned. Both times potentially fierce opposition to Connally—first from GOP conservatives who adored Agnew, then from moderates and liberals in both parties—forced him to drop the idea. Still, Nixon's high regard for his glittering star knew no bounds. "Only three men in America understand the use of power," he once told Arthur Burns. "I do. John Connally does. And I guess Nelson [Rockefeller] does."

It is one of Providence's majestic ironies that the same Richard Nixon who carried Connally to the mountaintop nearly dragged him down into the abyss. Connally joined the Nixon administration for one reason: he saw no future for a conservative Texan in a Democratic Party overrun with women, blacks, and McGovernites, and he saw a route to the White House through Nixon and the Republicans. Certainly his decision reflected no ideological conversion or long-standing affinity for the GOP. He and Nixon simply arrived at an understanding, spoken or unspoken, that Connally would be the president's anointed successor in 1976. But first Connally had to burn his last bridge to the Democratic Party and become a Republican. That he did in April 1973, still confident, as Nixon was, that the nation would soon quit "wallowing in Watergate" and move on to more important matters. At the time Connally didn't suspect that his old friend Jake Jacobsen, a lobbyist for the Associated Milk Producers of America, would try to save his own felonious hide by fingering John Connally as the man to whom he gave a

Stephen Chapman is a Washington correspondent for Texas Monthly.

\$10,000 bribe to win the White House's support for higher milk support prices. The flower-strewn road that Nixon had promised would lead Connally to the Celestial City now looked like it would turn out to be a path to prison, disgrace, and ruin. Connally, a proud man who had interpreted his survival of Lee Harvey Oswald's fusillade of bullets in Dallas as a sign that he was one of "God's elect," must have wondered at the grim depths of the divine sense of humor.

Facing the prospect of spending the next 19 years in jail, Connally hired the best defense lawyer money could buy: Edward Bennett Williams. For his part, Williams gave one of the most dazzling performances of a brilliant career. He paraded a blue-ribbon panel of character witnesses before the all-black District of Columbia jury—including Lady Bird Johnson, Barbara Jordan, Robert Strauss, and Billy Graham. He shredded Jacobsen's uncorroborated testimony like confetti, and delivered a spellbinding closing oration to the jury: "Three weeks from now, this case may have faded from your recollection. You will have gone on to other things. The prosecution will go on to other matters. The court will go on to other cases. But what you do in that jury room will place an indelible mark on John B. Connally for the rest of his life. Nothing in a lifetime of glory and tragedy will be as final as your verdict . . ." The jury deliberated less than six hours and returned with a verdict: Not Guilty. A jubilant Connally stood on the steps of the US District courthouse and let everybody know he still had his eye on the Oval Office. "I hope as long as I live I don't lose the desire to participate in public affairs," he said. "I've seen this system of ours work today."

So now, eight years after Connally first sowed seed in Republican soil, he is preparing to gather in the harvest: John Connally is running for president. In the past year he has made some 150 appearances for Republican candidates all over the country, raised millions of dollars for the party (and nearly half a million for his own political action committee), and won converts at every stop with right-wing rhetoric that might make Ronald Reagan blush. He insists that he hasn't made up his mind about running, promising a decision by the first of the year, but no one doubts that all this barnstorming is just a warmup for 1980. Two years before the election, he has already picked up his first formal endorsement, from the *Saturday Evening Post*. In a cover story that even one old Connally aide called "the most unbelievable puff piece I've ever seen," the magazine gushed about his "strength of purpose, clarity of vision, and courage to deal with inflation at home and communism abroad," concluding that John Connally was "the man most capable of restoring greatness to the White House."

Even burdened by an indictment and a blessing from the nation's most distinguished unconvicted felon, Connally remains a dangerous man. The danger has two sources: his highly impressive personality and his

utter lack of principle. At root, Connally has no beliefs, only interests; but he can adopt whatever views suit his audience and weave a rhetorical spell that few politicians can match. He projects those qualities Americans look for in a leader—toughness, decisiveness, overwhelming self-assurance. His image stands in particularly sharp relief next to that of Jimmy Carter, whose soft-spoken idealism sometimes comes across as weakness or naivete. On close examination, though, Connally's gifts only accentuate his woeful defects. He is reminiscent of John Randolph's comparison of a political enemy to a "rotten mackerel by moonlight"—shining and stinking at once.

Having watched the Reagan insurrection two years ago, Connally figures he must woo the GOP's right wing. There are signs that he has had some success among the rank-and-file, who have been pleasantly surprised by the aggressively conservative tone of his stump speeches. Clarke Reed, the longtime chairman of the Mississippi Republican Party and a conservative stalwart, says Connally "would make a good president" and thinks he would be acceptable even to those who prefer Reagan. Howard Phillips, head of the non-partisan Conservative Caucus and a supporter of Representative Phil Crane, thinks some conservatives are disillusioned with Reagan and might easily be won over by Connally. "Some of them suspect that Reagan is only a script reader, not a script writer," says Phillips. "No one suspects that about Connally."

If Connally can pass a conservative saliva test, then Judas Iscariot could talk his way past St. Peter. On foreign affairs, true, his obsessive preoccupation with Russian "expansionism" would satisfy the most bellicose anti-Communist. But in domestic matters one finds no trace of any consistent ideology whatsoever. To deny that he has coherent philosophical outlook, however, is not to suggest that there is not a pattern to his ideas and policies over the years. Connally is neither a liberal nor a conservative. If one had to apply a label to his views, probably the best would be Corporate Socialist. Connally stands for free enterprise for the poor, welfare for the rich. Connally doesn't have much use for laissez-faire capitalism, but he has an abiding love for big business and big businessmen. Liberals generally stereotype all conservative politicians this way, and they're only rarely mistaken—as in the case of Goldwater, whose 1964 campaign scared most corporate businessmen half to death—but if ever a politician has earned the right to be called a tool of corporate America, it is John Connally. And if the GOP nominates this grotesque caricature of a Republican for president, it will have forfeited any right to claim that it is anything but the political arm of America's country clubs.

Connally's principal solution to our economic woes is "to get a partnership going between government and private industry." Connally gave a good illustration of

the partnership he envisioned in the spring of 1971, when he proposed a \$250 million loan guarantee for the foundering, badly mismanaged Lockheed Aircraft Corporation and another \$200 million guarantee for the Penn Central Railroad, which eventually had to file for reorganization under the Bankruptcy Act. The Lockheed loan guarantee represented the most extravagant instance of corporate welfare in American history. If Connally had gotten his way, though, it would have been only the first of many. While Connally was Treasury Secretary, the administration also proposed a \$3- to \$4-billion program to finance research in a variety of high-technology industries, characterized then by *TNR* as "a massive rehabilitation program for aerospace contractors and unemployed and underemployed engineers." This proposal bears the unmistakable imprint of Connally, who sees an urgent need for the United States government to promote such industries to enhance our competitive vigor in the world trade arena. He has also urged the creation of a new Reconstruction Finance Corporation to provide "seed money" for new businesses and to finance energy exploration.

It was his mistrust of competitive capitalism, coupled with the insistent demands of corporate businessmen, that enabled Connally to embrace wage and price controls with the enthusiasm he exhibited back in 1971. Nowadays Connally says he knew all along that the controls wouldn't work but that he thought them necessary "to give this country, as well as the rest of the world, time to think and reflect and to stabilize." If he felt any reluctance about the controls in 1971, he concealed it well: he was one of the most enthusiastic advocates of controls in the administration and regarded them as much less temporary than Nixon and his other advisers. At the outset, he expected the controls to stay in force until perhaps 1976 (the final phase actually ended in May 1974) and advocated some form of permanent guidelines. "It would be unwise to think we can go back to where we were before," he said not long after the controls were imposed. "American business and labor may have to get used to the idea of living within certain parameters."

Connally knows how unpopular wage and price (especially price) controls are among the conservatives he hopes to enlist in his camp, and now he cheerfully admits he was wrong. "If I had the wisdom of hindsight," he recently told a conference at the conservative American Enterprise Institute, "I probably would have recommended against wage and price controls . . . they were a mistake." They were also an unqualified failure. The consumer price index rose at only a slightly reduced rate during the first year of controls, and by the last eight months of the program, inflation was accelerating at a rate nearly three times that before controls were established. Yet Connally, who fled the cabinet in the spring of 1972, managed to

escape the blame for the ineffectiveness of the economic policies he helped to formulate.

Wage and price controls were not his only contribution. Connally does deserve some credit for Nixon's decision to close the gold window and for the 1971 devaluation of the dollar. Connally also resolved to "get tough" with our trade partners to open up more markets to American exports. The goal was desirable, but one Connally pursued by questionable means (principally, a 10 percent import surcharge), and with only negligible results. At the same time, he managed to anger most of our allies, particularly Japan and West Germany, with his abrasive and frequently rude approach to negotiations. Said one Associated Press analyst, "He apparently offended almost everyone there was to offend in his foreign affairs dealings. . . . He took great pride in dealing for big stakes, taking the great risks and more or less threatening countries as you would a poker partner or a competitor in a Texas business deal." All his bluster and bullying gained the United States very little, but it earned Connally an image among Americans as a take-charge, stand-up leader who wouldn't let the US be pushed around.

Connally's calculated appeal to the Reaganites stems partly from the knowledge that he has no solid base at home. Reagan won the Texas primary by a 2-to-1 margin in 1976, and if he runs in 1980 Texas will almost certainly be solidly in his column, regardless of what Connally does. Even if Reagan doesn't run (or if he is somehow knocked out in the early primaries), Connally can count on nothing certain from Texas. Another Texan, George Bush, also is running for president. There is no certainty that Connally could beat Bush in a Texas primary; for that matter, there is no assurance that either could beat a more conservative candidate like Phil Crane.

Connally is not as popular among Texans as is widely believed. When one Republican candidate commissioned a statewide poll in 1976, he was surprised to learn that the former governor had a higher unfavorable rating than several nationally known Republicans, the only exception being Nelson Rockefeller. Asked how a Connally endorsement would affect their perception of a candidate, 38 percent of those questioned said it would make them less likely to vote for him; only 34 percent said it would make them more likely to vote for him. Connally has made a lot of friends in the Texas GOP since he joined it five years ago, but he has also made some new enemies to go with the old-timers who still harbor a grudge dating back to his days as governor. This year he has campaigned for several candidates for Congress and for gubernatorial candidate William Clements, but in past election years he has been less helpful. He did almost nothing for Representative Alan Steelman in his 1976 race against incumbent Democrat Lloyd Bentsen for the US Senate. This was not because Bentsen was once a Connally

protégé; in fact, Connally is reputed to despise Bentsen for his failure to help out during the bribery trial. Nor was it because Steelman was any sort of embarrassment, as many GOP candidates in Texas are. *Texas Monthly* once rated him one of the state's best congressmen and described him as "a conscientious, intelligent man" who "has won the respect and admiration of his colleagues in both parties." No, Connally had other reasons for his lack of enthusiasm, mainly the fact that Steelman didn't run with Connally's wealthy, powerful friends. An unpretentious man who actually believed in the better ideals of the Republican Party, Steelman had little in common with the fat cats who clustered around Connally. Just as Averell Harriman said of Jimmy Carter, "How can he be elected president when I've never heard of him?", Connally must have asked himself, "How can a man whose net worth is minus \$2000 be a US senator?"

Connally also surprised some Texas Republicans by his conduct in last spring's gubernatorial primary, which pitted Clements, a Houston multi-millionaire who made his fortune in oil drilling equipment, against Ray Hutchison, a highly respected former state legislator and state Republican chairman who had been instrumental in persuading Connally to join the party. Many Republicans were surprised that Connally insisted on staying formally neutral instead of endorsing Hutchison, reputed to be a close friend. Apparently oil money is thicker than personal loyalty. But they were even more surprised when Connally innocently suggested to a reporter, back before either candidate had formally filed for the governor's race, that Hutchison might instead run for lieutenant governor. To anyone who was listening, Connally's choice for governor was plain. Hutchison, a good soldier, didn't protest, but he didn't win either.

Connally's imposing stature and unshakable self-confidence are so impressive—especially to the easily dazzled, like James J. Kilpatrick—that they distract attention from questions about his leadership capacity and his political judgment. His vaunted shrewdness has been much exaggerated. Connally erred in concluding in 1972 that the Democratic Party was inextricably in the grip of McGovernites and could never select a right-leaning Southerner. He then cast his lot with the Republicans, apparently believing they would emerge as America's majority party. Somehow he also judged that Richard Nixon would be so revered by Americans as to be able to crown his successor in 1976. An ordinary citizen might be forgiven for such mistakes, but great leaders are supposed to be more closely in tune with the rhythms of public opinion, not to mention the larger flow of history. And what else but abysmal political short-sightedness could explain Connally's partnership with two wealthy Arabs to buy a bank in Houston?

Some of Connally's proposals which seem merely odd

at first glance actually suggest that he contemplates radical changes in the American system of government. Given his way, Connally would transform the presidency into a near dictatorship and the system of checks and balances between the legislative and executive branches into a pale facsimile of what it has been. At last count, he's proposed no fewer than seven constitutional amendments, including one to limit the president to a single six-year term, senators to two six-year terms, and representatives to three four-year terms. Another slightly comical proposal, which would require congressmen to spend three months a year in their districts, seems designed to get legislators out of the president's hair as much as improve representation. Overall, Connally's aims seem to be to remove the check of popular opinion on the actions of the president and to weaken the check provided by a Congress composed of experienced, full-time career congressmen. Another Connally amendment would require reconfirmation of all federal judges by the Senate every 10 years and force their retirement at age 70—measures that would make the federal courts less independent and more vulnerable to "packing" by presidents. Connally also thinks any Supreme Court decision he doesn't like should be corrected by a constitutional amendment; he would constitutionally prohibit busing and racial quotas, for example. He apparently wouldn't be satisfied with being a mere president; when Connally looks in the mirror he sees DeGaulle.

In any event, Connally's electoral prospects look dim at this point. If he were as smart as he is reputed to be, he would go back to his Picos Ranch and raise cattle instead of running for president. He seems to have developed no obvious constituency in the GOP. Two groups he could logically be expected to appeal to—conservatives and southerners—generally supported Reagan in 1976, and most likely will prefer him in 1980. Connally is both detested and distrusted by most Republican moderates to begin with.

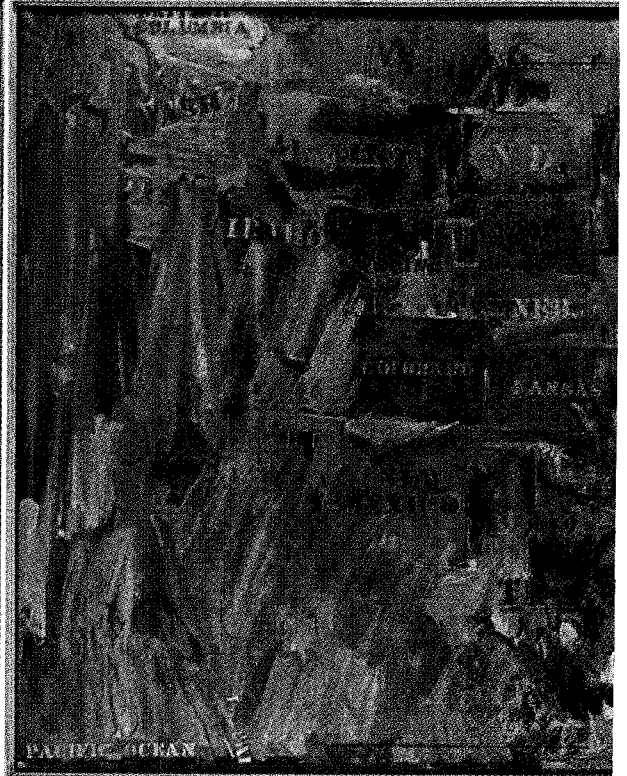
Connally sees his biggest problem as the same one that plagued Nelson Rockefeller—he could win the election easily, but he will have a tough time getting the nomination. Connally's past disappointments no doubt make him feel a little like Rockefeller, a man who thought he was born to rule, but never got to. If Connally could somehow get the nomination, perhaps he could beat President Carter. But if he won the nomination, he also might be tormented by the same nightmare that bothered President Ford's campaign manager, Stuart Spencer, in 1976. The night before election day, he told one reporter, "I could just see myself waking up in the morning, turning on my television set, and there would be Nixon voting early in San Clemente. And some network reporter would go up to him, stick a microphone in his face, and ask him whom he voted for. And Nixon would say, 'Who do you think? I put him in, didn't I?'"

"Take a

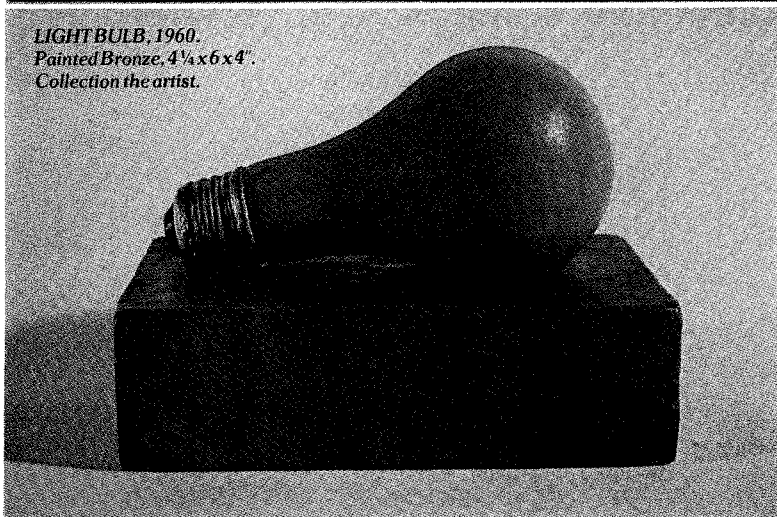
GRAY NUMBERS, 1958. Encaustic and collage on canvas, 67 x 49½". Private collection.



MAP, 1963. Encaustic and collage on canvas, 60 x 93". Private collection.



LIGHT BULB, 1960.
Painted Bronze, 4½ x 6 x 4".
Collection the artist.



n object.

**Do something to it.
Do something else to it.
Do something else to it."**

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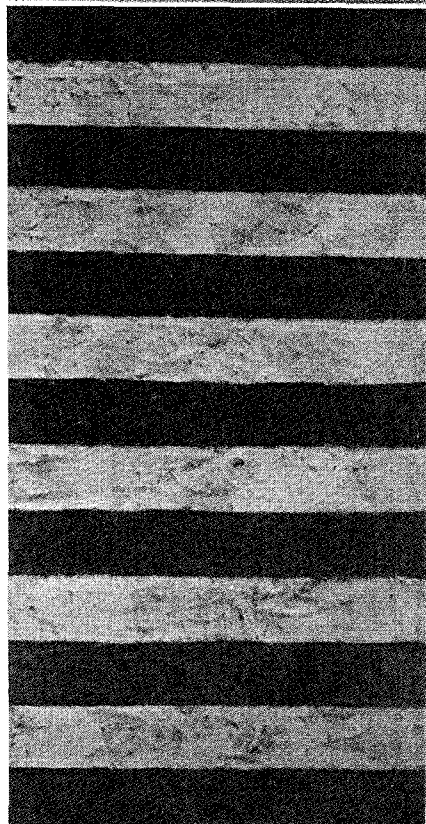
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"Jasper Johns," an exhibition organized by the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, N.Y. appeared there from Oct. 18, 1977 to Jan. 22, 1978. Subsequent showings include: Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Feb. 12 to March 26, 1978; Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris, April 18 to June 4, 1978; Hayward Gallery, London, June 21 to July 30, 1978; The Seibu Museum of Art, Tokyo, Aug. 19 to Sept. 26, 1978; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Oct. 20 to Dec. 10, 1978. The exhibition is made possible by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and Philip Morris Incorporated.



FLAG, 1955. Encaustic, oil and collage on fabric. 42 1/4 x 60 3/4". The Museum of Modern Art, N.Y.

Arts and Lives

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Over the (Bigger) Rainbow

It's easy to dislike *The Wiz* (Universal), but it's also easy to like it. It's torrentially syrupy, calculatedly simplistic, and the star is weak. On the other hand, it's lavish lavish lavish: no one really believes in the syrup or the simplicities except as a medium through which some skills can operate; and the skills are there: almost every person connected with the film except the star is excellent. If you're going to spend \$35 million (reportedly) on a remake of *The Wizard of Oz*, revised and updated with an all-black cast, you couldn't do a great deal better than this. You'd probably end up with the same star, Diana Ross. At least I can't think of another black female singer who has a name in music and a couple of starring films behind her and could go a little way toward protecting your investment.

I missed *The Wiz* on Broadway—am still missing it because it's still on—but since we're dealing here with a version of a version, I don't feel especially impoverished by the loss. Kansas has become Harlem, and little Dorothy is now 24. Her problem is that she won't go south of 125th Street and won't leave the haven of her teaching job with small children. Afraid of Life, is Dorothy. A snowstorm sweeps her away, and she's off to see the Wiz (special effects by a real wiz, Albert Whitlock). As before, she meets the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, and the Cowardly Lion. Her road leads, fantastically, south of 125th Street to a city that has a Big Apple rising in the sky above it. Eventually she meets the Wicked Witch, who runs an immense sweat shop, and the Wiz who, like King Kong but craven, is perched on the top of the Trade Center.

All the story changes fit one another, as far as fitting is needed, and they build a certain kidding charm. The production designs by Tony Walton are lush, with more hyped-up theatricality than sheer cinema feel. The giant plazas, the giant

sweat shop are more like incredibly big stage sets than native film sets, and this feeds an unconscious gobbling hunger in us for the impossible. One cavil: why couldn't the yellow brick road have been brick, instead of crazy pavement? Walton's costumes are kitsch as kitsch can, when kitsch has millions to spend and some wit, vulgarly gorgeous but knowingly so. Another cavil: I thought I saw touches of Ralph Bakshi's *Heavy Traffic* in masks like those of the motorcycle gang.

Extravagance empowered extravaganzas, and some talented people reveled in a chance that doesn't come along often these days of beer-can pictures. The cinematographer, Oswald Morris, is one of the best, and he has fun here in finding a whole spectrum within scenes shot within one overall tonality of red or blue or green. Dede Allen, than whom there is no better editor, dazzles along in her (I think) first musical with her cutting of musical numbers: picking points for emphasis and view-changes for variety without losing the sense of the number-as-number coursing on. And Sidney Lumet, one of the outstanding hot-and-cold directors in film history (his last outing was *Equus*), is blazing hot here. This is his first film musical (he directed at least one in the theater), and his evident enthusiasm for the job is infectious. There's energy and enjoyment in the direction, and his discreet use of the crane, rising slightly on the big-floor numbers, whoops up the excitement nicely. One more cavil: the last shot, a big close-up of Ross singing—even though it has some furbelows in the background—suggests the last shot of *Funny Girl*.

Let's not compare Michael Jackson as the Scarecrow, Nipsey Russell as the Tin Man, and Ted Ross as the Lion with Ray Bolger, Jack Haley, and Bert Lahr (*Bert Lahr!*) of the 1939 film. Let's just say that Jackson, Russell, and Ross are absolutely

endearing in their own rights. Even Mabel King, the Wicked Witch, belts out "Don't Nobody Bring Me No Bad News" in a way that makes her endearing. Lena Horne, suspended in the sky as Glinda the Good, delivers her hokey song near the end with the power to bring down a good many roofs. Richard Pryor, the Wiz, isn't quite up to the others, but then some of the goodies in his role have been given to Dorothy.

I am just not a Diana Ross fan. Her voice seems to reach for notes and to bleat when it gets them. I think it's called "styling." She has no sex or any other appeal for me. I don't believe she's 24 or naive, and I don't like looking at throat tendons on high notes. All through the film I kept playing Dorothy myself, standing in for Ross so that the show could go on.

Louis Johnson's choreography is trite, except near the end where it gets large and lively. The music, mostly by Charlie Smalls, does its job well enough while passing through to oblivion. Smalls' lyrics, however, make Rodgers and Hammerstein sound like *The Waste Land*. (And the rhymes! "If You're listenin', God, Please don't make it hard.")

Not many musicals can stand a great deal of thought, and *The Wiz* can stand a lot less than that. If you can take it just as an occasion for the exercise of some real talents, a good time can be had much of the time.

Segue to a book. "*The Wiz* . . . was an all-black re-creation of *The Wizard of Oz*, far
(continued on page 42)

Films Worth Seeing

Autumn Sonata. Ingmar Bergman, Ingrid Bergman, and Liv Ullmann create a powerful film about the reunion (blasted) of a mother and daughter. Monumentally strong.

Girlfriends. A warm welcome to Claudia Weill and her first feature—some truth at last about a New York young woman today.

Go Tell the Spartans. Try to find this, though it's hard. Vietnam 1964, recounted with much more candor than cliché.

Somebody Killed Her Husband. Farrah Fawcett-Majors (no kidding) and Jeff Bridges fall in love appealingly, so we stick through the wild murder story that follows.

SK

That There is More...

That there is more to the world than we thought; that there is more to it than we can say or remember; that it transforms itself on inspection; that we have reason to mourn and marvel at it: so we are persuaded by certain works of poetry. The selections printed here exert this kind of persuasion, each according to its power. First are three songs of experience, recalling with bitter lyric ease old poetry and myth; then, infusing *mana* with Platonism, a gnostic tribute to an Indian artifact; next an elaborate addendum to a grim and famous poem by Robert Frost on Design in Nature; then notes on autumnal haunting and passing; then a vision of impassioned *flamenco*. Sixth in order is a strong surreal litany qualifying items scientific, geographic, historic, and cosmic; then a web of words to celebrate the web of the spider; a narrative using legendary romantic motifs under dry control; a sequence on episodes in Christ's life meditated in the cult of the Rosary; and finally a lay version in song of the astronomers' all-inclusive process, the flaring and dying of the universe.—R.F.

Of Age

1

I carry my seventy years
Like a woman with child.
They are in me, fateful and foolish,
Absolute, wild.

They cannot be born into time
To sicken or bloom;
Then why do they grapple and stir
As though in a womb?

2

Women live longer than men:
The few that I loved are dead.
Had I the power to summon
Whom would I bring to my bed?

Had three Eurydices waited
In the flitting world underneath,
No Orpheus would have descended
To make his bargain with Death.

I envy his pure assurance:
He had only one shade to name.
How memory mixes the moments
And makes of all choosing, shame.

3

We'll go to the wood no more,
We'll go no more a'walking;
True, they were dark and lovely
But there three beasts were stalking.

How they clawed at my heart,
The lion, wolf and leopard.
Green pastures, quiet waters?
I never found the shepherd.

Skylark and nightingale,
Though never heard by me,
Troubled me with their rapture
Beyond reality.

How disentangle then
The image from event,
Luminous metaphor
From fact's obscure intent.

The mythic animals,
Forests unseen, strange birds—
They haunted all my days;
Now my days haunt the words.

Marie Syrkin

Fetish

Bone and bell, blood-dipped feather,
Arrowhead lashed to an azurite eagle,

Strike in tracks of cloud-flown scars,
So power to answer outcry with insight,

To soar above landscapes ranged with sunburst
Flowers, ghostly pueblos, sierras of excess

Or canyons of doubt, may fall to who invokes
This figure, its presence a divining

Of ourselves as overseers of the world
In steepening ascents toward its original.

J.D. McClatchy

Design: A Further Word

Dull gold of oakleaves falling where they might:
A patch of Byzantium in the undergrowth
For the trilliums' silver jubilation.
But, like an oath
Half hissed in a quiet chapel,
this
this sight:
One flower had pierced one leaf, torn it not quite
Apart as the poignant arms would lift. A troth
Dismaying to flower and leaf: one doom for both.
You've heard of a crown of thorns, of a Persian rite
Impaling its victim—stark—in heaven's own light?

Place, time, and weather combined so here:
a-sprawl

On its gibbet inches up, the oakleaf, tight
Spikes into flesh, tormented his blonde upright
Tormenter. A whim of the wind or soft rainfall
Produced, of the earth's own virtue, vice and awl.

John Frederick Nims

Departures

All Hallows rides high in bare branches,
fleeing the strange host left
in its wake. Long-eared dogs peer
from windowsills to howl
their masters' slow demise;
this is a day gone dry
with cicada shells and wind
of the emptying dead.

Even the geese point due south,
hearing the call
of the far side of the earth.

Katherine Soniat

The Spanish Dancer

He is dancing the gypsy's journey
compressing it into a thousand heel
ricochets. He is dancing the bull fight
story and the minotaur behind that,
the victory of cunning over evil.
He is celebrating the triumph of flesh.
Never mind that the night comes.
Never mind the audience strung together
by taut nerves. Keep your eyes on the stage
floor burning and his dancing, stamping
out, stirring up more fire. More.

Diana Der Hovanessian

The Mouths of the Year

The actual mouth, lips tucked in
Like neat blankets, oak-tree
Engraved on the roof, tongue at ease.

The mouth of steely night, fibrous
Rain, the mouth of a glinting dawn
Of aluminum, the mouth the smell of rubber.

The mouth ready and bitter as a coin
Rolling in a pipe, hot and heavy enough
To drop through the earth as through a pool.

The mouth of timing, of north, of electricity,
Vacant as gravitation, flat on one side
Like the states of Virginia and Illinois.

The open mouth of sun-stroke, healing
In the shade, the mouth of a character
Of light, the mouth of the Middle Ages.

The mouth of Canis Major, hung in space,
The maw of space, the malling mouth,
The mouth of ample Jesus, of the morning star.

James Paul

Spiderwork

Standing like an Andean Indian scanning
the chasm he plans to span, the spider
spots among plots of unoccupied space
a site that suits her. At once she unwinds

a hairfine line, feat of foot
as a goat, crosses the gap on that floating
cable, spinning, as she goes, silk spokes
and a spiral. Snare and delusion, the tricks

of the trapper, prosper the spider, a true
illusionist, using, guilelessly, ruses
that delude. Even the fly with its "thousands
of tiny six-sided eyes" can't elude

her weir of air-colored ropes that rope
the air. Though with no such intent, the orb-weaver
ornaments unadorned corners of space
with an openwork lace that turns, with the sun

on the dew, to a pearled-and-rubied rose window—
a view she is blind to. Appetite's the muse
that moves her, without knowing how or why,
to ply the antique art she lives by,

as, suspending her seine of invisible silk
in the sea of the air, she traps the passing
gnat—the unwitting cause of that filigree
flower of her labor, the net's rosette.

Dorothy Donnelly

Voyage from Sudbury

From where the boat lay moored the lake looked small,
But opening bays, revealing shore on shore,
Opened at last upon no shore at all,
As the craft moved by neither sail nor oar.

After three nights, foreknown, the isle appeared,
Smaller, though still enough to beach a skiff,
And jagged spines were all, as morning cleared,
Remaining of the castle on the cliff.

He searched the ruins, following a sound
Like wind through bones, that shook the portals carved
With saints and angels, till at last he found
The charger, long since lame and all but starved.

The stringent hermit, who had parsed his sins,
Would laugh, he knew, at this belated call,
To see him back where everyone begins,
Though grown more proper to a funeral.

What he remembered of twelve kneeling knights
At mass, the lifted cup, perhaps the Grail,
Was truth unshamed by late, less certain lights,
But lacked the features for a timelier tale.

As for the lady, she was also true,
So he believed; but standing on this shore,
He saw himself for something *deja vu*;
She told him it had all been done before.

He noticed then: his boat, boarded without
A sane man's scrutiny of stem or stern,
Lay foundered in the surf, her bilge knocked out,
And on the gunwale painted, No Return.

Well, it was done, and he could not lament.
One bell still dangled from the belfry's height;
He swung the clapper till his strength was spent,
And let the echoes call him what they might.

Those tardy peals, that should have sunk like wrecks
Midsea, persisted quaintly, quite beyond
Bells' usual reach, distracting Middlesex,
And startling Sudbury's calm, fictive pond.

Cedric Whitman

The Joyful Mysteries

I. The Annunciation

The voice that called me
"delight", the message that rendered words
futile: clothe him
in flesh, that inarticulate pressure,
that significance without words.

Before mother I am self.
You will never know me
as I am, was first: lonely,
fluid and tendril,
nerve, bone chamber
of light,
coolness without body
yet body of girl,
now body of fear

that from this word forth
I am changed, and
this is permanent, obscure.

Your small perfect face
floats impassive
unfolding within and within,
tangle of word and silence,
root and hair, becoming
my unborn self, yet more—

O little soul,
mother of being
in me
sing.

II. The Visitation

I brought with me a rose
its center pure and golden
unfolding and unfolding toward light,
O what is our deepest desire?

To know we do not know
you, and this is insoluble,
this is joy.

The heart has its own law,
the rose unfolding, its desire,

this sweet flesh
we create
from blood, voice, and water.

The child will fall from dark and water
to earth, air, and the fire of touch.

The child will go by no will of his own
from the dark and weightless dream,

obedient to flesh. Enter, child, at this
gate of pain, and be humbled.

III. The Nativity

What is known
to the body not yet born?
It wakes suddenly
and feels itself falling.
It is laid in a shroud
on its bed of earth.

The helpless body
turned out
at once begins to eat
its fragment of air
and time.

The animals watch,
their eyes full of endurance,
as I give
to this sweet flesh
of death, life
and the blood
which heals everything living.

IV. The Presentation at the Temple

Dear flame,
nature's first color,
in candlelight
you first were known: pure light!

Newborn, marked, outlined
as though by flame
you are at once this wound in me,
most joyful and severe

you are the tiny pulse of pain
the unwilling law in the heart
the terrible insomnia of the soul
the thirst trying to be quenched.

After this, time will begin again.
And things, for a moment illumined,
more real and insatiable than ever before,
will resume their drab journey into it.

V. The Finding at the Temple

Loss is a wall of sadness.
Returning at night on the dark road
snow is like flakes of sleep.
It fills our collars. And suddenly
over the silent fields,
a great ring of meaning, and a voice,
and a tree, asleep,
yet living
by that great root.

Peggy Rizza

What Happens is This

That a great wind from nowhere
Takes nothing, and whips it into a shape,
The shape of itself, and this shape
Spins free of the great wind, or seems to do so,
And moves across spaces and voids and beyond them,
And gestures and mouths as it goes,
Feeding, coupling, venting
(Strange acts for the shapes of nothing from nowhere!)
And seeming
To generate shades of itself, that stir and spin
Too, across spaces and voids

And so it goes on

Does it so?

A long way off,
The great wind from nowhere
Back to the nothing it was

dies down

And the shadows of nothing from nowhere
That seem to be stirring and spinning
Over spaces and voids
And moving along by themselves

die down

die down

and die down

—Or otherwise, elsewhere, the wind
The great wind from nowhere

flares up, and becomes

A firestorm, searing the spaces and voids
Searing the nothing it goes to
Out of the nothing it was

And the shadows of nothing from nowhere
That seem to be stirring and spinning
Over spaces and voids
And moving along by themselves

die down

die down

and die down

Maurice English

Books Considered

America in Vietnam by Guenter Lewy

(Oxford University Press; \$19.95)

Every war is fought twice—first militarily and then, especially among the losers, politically and intellectually. The recent outpouring of memoirs and novels about Vietnam still represents an effort simply to assimilate the experience, to make it humanly comprehensible. Guenter Lewy's book is the first salvo in the re-fighting of the Vietnam War.

America in Vietnam is based largely on the classified records of the United States Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps. For some years now, the secretaries of the military services have had "discretionary authority to permit qualified researchers" to study this material. No one except himself, Lewy reports, has yet done so. Has anyone else tried? What are the criteria of official discretion? He doesn't say. In any case, this is a book written with the extensive cooperation of US military authorities, who are unlikely to doubt Lewy's qualifications once they have read his book. He is, in the language of the Vietnam war, a "friendly" scholar. But he is also an honest scholar, and he has provided a body of evidence from which one might well draw conclusions very different from his own. Nor are his own conclusions entirely uncritical. After all, we did lose the war, and military defeat is commonly thought to justify military criticism. But when Lewy turns to political, legal, and moral issues, he writes as an apologist for the American war. And it is on these issues that the war will be, and should be, decisively re-fought.

The book falls uneasily into two parts. The first part is a careful and largely persuasive attack upon American strategy and tactics in Vietnam and a harsh indictment of General Westmoreland as a military leader. The attack is impressive above all in its detail, in the recounting of one heavy-handed campaign after another, where again and again American soldiers inflicted more damage on "friends" (that is, on men and women whose loyalty we had to win if the war itself was ever to be won) than on enemies. I cannot repeat the details here, but it is worth summarizing Lewy's general argument. We sent a

conventional army to Vietnam, provided it with immense firepower, and turned it loose as if it were fighting a conventional war. The results were frighteningly destructive, not only to the rural society of the Vietnamese, but also to our own hopes for a political victory in the countryside. Using tanks, artillery, and airplanes to win hearts and minds was like using bulls to sort china. We broke more hearts than we won. We made rural Vietnam, as an American official wrote of Binh Dinh province after Operation MASHIE/WHITE WING, "an extremely dangerous and unpredictable place to live." And so we lost a war where victory depended above all upon the pacification of the countryside.

Lewy's own summary statement about American destructiveness is characteristically euphemistic. "There is reason to believe," he says, "that the suffering inflicted upon large segments of South Vietnam's rural population during long years of high technology warfare . . . undermined the efforts of the Saigon regime to win the allegiance of the people . . . and contributed to the spread of a feeling of resignation, weariness, and an unwillingness to go on fighting against the resolute opponent from the North." Yes, an operation like PIPESTONE CANYON might have had that effect: in a period of about two weeks in 1969, the island of Go Noi, roughly five miles long and two miles wide, formed by two rivers, was hit by 750,000 pounds of bombs. Marines then moved in, encountering no organized resistance but losing men to mines and booby traps. Hundreds of villagers were removed, and Rome plows sent in. Lewy quotes the after-action report: "Go Noi Island has been converted from a densely populated, heavily wooded area into a barren wasteland, a plowed field. In that, the operation was a success." One might comment more sharply than Lewy does about successes of this sort, but he does tell the story, and no one can claim that his account is leftist propaganda.

The summary tale doesn't require editorial embellishment. The American way of war was largely responsible for the very high civilian death toll—over

Richard Rose and Guy Peters assess the risks of governmental bankruptcy.

Two leading political scientists examine how six affluent democratic nations—the U.S., Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Sweden—are fast approaching the end of the political line: the point at which government can no longer increase public spending without reducing the take-home pay of its citizens. This important book is the first attempt to deal with the political consequences of the modern welfare state, the pressures which confront elected leaders—in "capitalist" nations like the United States as well as "socialist" states like Britain and Sweden—with an unpleasant choice: cut public spending or face political bankruptcy.

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half a million on Lewy's estimate by the end of the fighting, 45 percent of total battle deaths, a proportion slightly higher than in World War II, where hundreds of thousands of civilians died in the carpet bombing of urban areas: in Vietnam, the same result was achieved piecemeal in the bombardment of countless villages. Similarly, we were largely responsible for the "generation" of vast numbers of refugees—a deliberate policy for much of the war, aimed at depriving the guerrillas of rural support. Three and a half million Vietnamese were driven from their villages between 1964 and 1969 according to Lewy's estimate, 20 percent of the population of South Vietnam, and this figure excludes the one million people whose homes were destroyed during the Tet offensive and the American counter-offensive in 1968. And finally, we were largely responsible for the destruction of villages and hamlets: here Lewy provides no statistics, but the numbers were clearly high. He quotes a report by John Paul Vann, senior American advisor in the second corps tactical zone:

In the last decade, I have walked through hundreds of hamlets that have been destroyed in the course of a battle, the majority as the result of the heavier friendly fire. The overwhelming majority . . . failed to yield sufficient evidence of damage to the enemy to justify the destruction of the hamlet. Indeed, it has not been unusual to have a hamlet destroyed and find absolutely no evidence of damage to the enemy . . .

All this was stupid and counter-productive: that is Lewy's indictment. But it was not illegal or "grossly immoral": that is his apology. He does not suggest criteria for moral grossness, and one is left gasping in wonder at what the criteria might be. In fact, Lewy argues only the legal case, as if morality were a realm to which scholarly qualification doesn't extend. (But what about the qualifications of citizens or simply of human beings?) The legal argument makes up the second part of the book and takes some four chapters, but the case is largely complete in chapter seven which, purged of its few critical passages, appeared this past February in *Commentary*. The task Lewy

sets for himself turns out to be surprisingly simple, for the laws of war are so vaguely stated and so radically incomplete that a brief for the defense is readily put together. Lewy's brief is "legalistic" in the common sense of that word, but I would hesitate to say that it is wrong. Concepts like "military necessity" and "proportionality" have been defined by the lawyers in ways that undercut their critical possibilities. Lewy simply exploits these definitions, as one would expect a good defense attorney to do. The result, however, is likely to leave the reader more uncomfortable with the law than easy with the war.

On one point, clearly, Lewy is right as to the current legal situation. Positive international law requires guerrillas to wear a distinctive insignia and to carry their arms openly; they are not permitted to disguise themselves as civilians or to hide behind the civilian population. The Viet Cong paid little attention to these rules, and so everything they did militarily was illegally done. By contrast, virtually everything that uniformed American

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soldiers did in fighting the Viet Cong (though not, of course, the willful murder of civilians, as at My Lai) was legally done: the blame for civilian deaths in the course of battle falls largely on the disguised guerrillas. That seems, indeed, to be the law. But it is hardly an adequate account of the political and moral realities of guerrilla war.

An alternative account would go something like this. So long as guerrilla forces fail to gain significant popular support, it is possible to fight them in the only way that promises success: to separate combatants from non-combatants, to kill or capture members of the first group, and win the hearts and minds of members of the second. The techniques necessary for a successful campaign of this sort are illustrated by the British war against communist guerrillas in Malaya. They are not easy or gentle, but they do preclude massive destruction. But once the guerrillas have themselves won hearts and minds, that crucial separation is no longer possible. It is less important then that the guerrillas hide behind the people than that the people stand in front of the guerrillas. When that happens, the anti-guerrilla troops, perceiving the massive hostility of the rural population, will fight the way we did in Vietnam. They will be driven by the uneasy sense that the only thing to do, as a marine lieutenant said, is "to kill them all." Surely at that point, one has to insist that the anti-guerrilla struggle as a whole is immoral, whoever is legally responsible for particular deaths.

Even without popular support for the guerrillas, moral responsibility for civilian deaths is likely to fall on the soldiers who cause those deaths, unless they go to considerable lengths to avoid them. Lewy quotes an argument made by Herman Kahn in 1968: when guerrillas use civilians as a shield, Kahn wrote, American soldiers have to accept the resulting disabilities "in much the same way that police accept such disabilities when chasing a criminal. No police department permits indiscriminate fire in a crowded city street, however desperately the criminal may be sought—and especially not if the criminal uses bystanders to shield himself." That is not an inappropriate analogy, for an anti-guerrilla struggle is often more like police work than conventional warfare. But the conclusions that follow from the analogy are not only strategic, as Lewy seems to believe, but also moral. If police do fire indiscriminately into crowds, we don't say

of them only that their tactics are counter-productive, alienating the non-criminal population, undercutting support for police budgets; we also say that they are acting wrongly, and we hold them responsible for the deaths they cause.

American soldiers did not always fire indiscriminately; nor did they ever set out to "kill them all." The charge made by some radicals at home that we were fighting a genocidal war in Vietnam was both ignorant and silly. Lewy has little difficulty disposing of such charges. (In fact, the population of South Vietnam increased at a high rate through the worst years of the fighting, from a little over 16 million in 1965 to almost 20 million in 1973—figures that make talk about genocide a little odd, to say the least.) The US fought a limited war in Vietnam. The argument against the war is that it wasn't limited enough; that the minimal moral and legal restraints established by the Army's rules of engagement were routinely violated; and that the violations were inherent and unavoidable in a war where American soldiers were or felt they were, as Lewy writes, "engulfed in a sea of enmity." The war was never genocidal or anything close to that, but there is a profound sense in which it was antisocial. Its brunt was borne not by the Viet Cong or the Northern "main forces," not by the guerrilla "infrastructure," but by the village society and peasant population of South Vietnam.

Could we have fought differently? Lewy argues that there was an alternative strategy and tactics, but the argument is fragmentary and thin. Instead of Westmoreland's large-scale "search and destroy" campaigns, Lewy suggests that American soldiers ought to have been dispersed into the villages, in squad or platoon strength, for the sake of local security and pacification. Westmoreland claimed at the time that this would expose the army to "defeat in detail," and that does not sound like a foolish response. Unless the local garrisons had strong popular support and could count on accurate intelligence, they would be in a dangerously vulnerable position. Pacification required a political base, and such a base seems to have been lost even before the arrival of the American army. "Our" Vietnamese, the various Saigon regimes and their officials and soldiers, had painfully little local support, and it is hard to see how foreign troops, even if they fought very carefully and killed very few civilians, could ever have

generated a sense of legitimacy. Westmoreland's quest for a "big" military victory was conditioned by a massive political defeat.

Hence, there has to be another side to Lewy's program. He argues, in effect, that we should have taken over complete political and military control of Vietnam. We should have set aside the endlessly corrupt Saigon regimes, incorporated Saigon's army into our own command structure, and enforced the social reforms we knew to be necessary—acted the part of "good colonialists." But surely this is the counsel of desperation. For the strength of the communists lay less in their communism than in their nationalism. In the course of the long war against the French, they had succeeded in establishing themselves as the leaders of a national liberation struggle. It was in response to that success, and in order to distinguish ourselves from the French, that we worked so hard to build and maintain at least the facade of a national government in the South. To acknowledge the impossibility of that effort is to acknowledge that we should never have intervened in Vietnam at all. It is to grant the central argument of the American Left of the 1960s.

That, of course, Lewy is unwilling to do. In a sense, the American Left is the main target of his book, more so than the Viet Cong or the communist government in Hanoi. But though he scores easy victories against what we might call the gesticulations of the Left—the rhetorical exaggerations and the anti-American or self-hating extravagances of the peace movement—he leaves its core position untouched. His account of the reasons for the American defeat is far more powerful than his defense of the legality of our efforts. And that account is ultimately much more than a study in counter-productive strategies; it is also, despite the intentions of the author, a study in military immorality. In guerrilla war, far more

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than in conventional war, those two are likely to go together: because of the importance of winning the allegiance of the civilian population, policies that undervalue innocent lives also undermine the war effort as a whole. When the political success of the guerrillas cuts off alternative policies, the war is or ought to be over. Rather than turn the

country where they are fighting into "a barren wasteland," the anti-guerrilla forces should go home.

Michael Walzer

Michael Walzer, a professor of government at Harvard, is the author of *Just and Unjust Wars* (Basic).

On Human Nature by Edward O. Wilson

(Harvard University Press; \$12.50)

On Human Nature, as its ambitious title implies, is a work of high intellectual daring. Edward Wilson, a Harvard zoologist, attempts to lay out a biological foundation for the social sciences, describe the genetic basis of the mind, sketch out the design of the ideal society, bridge the gap between the two cultures, suggest how existing religions could and should be replaced with a kind of scientific pantheism, and answer Hume's questions about the nature of human understanding—all within a mere 200 pages.

Wilson may not be right in all or part of what he says. But he is certainly worth reading. Here is an accomplished biologist explaining, in notably clear and unprevaricating language, what he thinks his subject now has to offer to the understanding of man and society. His purpose is to harness the new results of population genetics, ecology and ethology to a grand extension of Darwinian theory.

Darwin showed how man's physical form could be explained by the theory of evolution; Wilson, an expert on the behavior of ants and termites, believes that the same theory accounts for much of man's social behavior, including many features often assumed to be culturally determined, such as religion, ethical values, social structure, and certain aspects of sexual behavior and aggression. "The accumulated evidence for a large hereditary component [of human social behavior] is more detailed and more compelling than most persons, including even geneticists, realize. I will go further: it is already decisive," Wilson avers.

The implications of Wilson's thesis are rather considerable, for if true, no

system of political, social, religious or ethical thought can afford to ignore it. Indeed, Wilson says explicitly in his book that Marxism is based on "an inaccurate interpretation of human nature" and that Judaic and Christian theologians have founded their attitudes toward sex on an erroneous understanding of biology.

Why should anyone pay attention to this missionary myrmecologist bent on setting the world to rights? Wilson's first major book, *The Insect Societies* (1971) was a highly praised technical review addressed to his fellow scientists. It showed that he had a talent for synthesis in addition to the more usual scientific skill of analysis. Having summarized the nature of insect societies, he conceived the idea of a biological textbook built around sociality and the four major animal groups in which it has developed—jellyfish and their cousins, the ant-wasp-termite congerie, the vertebrates, and man. *Sociobiology*, which appeared in 1975, served as the manifesto of a small group of zoologists and anthropologists convinced that the time had come to explore the genetic foundations of animal and human social behavior. Wilson's second book helped establish the credentials as well as the presence of the new discipline of sociobiology. It would become a standard source on the social behavior of animals, as well as containing "some of the clearest discussions yet written" of the new advances in general population biology and demography, wrote English biologist C. H. Waddington in *The New York Review of Books*.

What brought *Sociobiology* to the public's attention was not so much its generally favorable scientific press as a

harsh political attack mounted by the Sociobiology Study Group, a Marxist-oriented collective of Cambridge-based academics and others, which merited attention not least because its members included several leading biologists. The thrust of their complaint was that genetic theories of society have repeatedly been used in the past to buttress abhorrent beliefs ranging from the social Darwinism of Herbert Spencer, who contended that public welfare was wrong because it delayed elimination of the poor and therefore genetically unfit, to the master-race delusions of National Socialism and contemporary fallacies about race and IQ tests. "Biological determinism," as the Sociobiology Study Group described the central feature of these theories, was a flaw they also perceived in Wilson's work. The last chapter of *Sociobiology*—the only chapter which discusses man—is in the group's view a pernicious justification of the existing political order since it argues a genetic and therefore immutable basis for practices such as male dominance and other unjust social arrangements "remarkably similar to the world which E. O. Wilson inhabits."

The somewhat personal nature of the Sociobiology Study Group's attack tended to distract attention from the importance of their critique, which was its sharp reminder of the past and maybe future abuses that surround the subject. The same point was made by economist Paul Samuelson in an early review of *Sociobiology*: "How do you keep distinct a Shockley from a Wilson? A Hitler from a Huxley? . . . To survive in the jungle of intellectuals, the sociobiologist had best tread softly in the zones of race and sex."

It is a tribute to Wilson's intellectual courage that in *On Human Nature*, the third of the trilogy, he has ignored both Samuelson's advice and the warnings of his political critics. He stamps through the fraught zone of sex, declaring, for example, that "homosexuals may be the genetic carriers of some of mankind's rare altruistic impulses." (In primitive societies they may have perpetuated their own genes through caring for their relative's children.) He delivers a frontal attack on his Marxist opponents with the declaration that Marxism "is sociobiology without biology." He blithely marches through the many savagely guarded territories into which the intellectual jungle is demarcated, announcing to the inhabitants that their disciplines, whether in the social sciences, humanities or ethics, are about

to be subsumed under the more fundamental truths of sociobiology. Wilson's trespasses, moreover, are committed in a style so clear and unacademic that a child can follow his argument. Which goes as follows.

The brain is not a blank sheet of paper. Like the brains of other animals, there are certain behaviors programmed into it, behaviors which have evolved because of the survival value they confer. In man's case, however, the genetically programmed behaviors are shaped by culture. Our distinctively human activities may seem to us to be entirely the product of culture but culture operates within the constraints set by the genetic programs. "The genes hold culture on a leash," Wilson says.

How can the genetic and cultural components of human nature be sorted out? Wilson believes that most of the genetic evolution of human social behavior must have occurred in the five million years prior to civilization when man lived in small bands of hunter-gatherers. Cultural evolution took place after the development of agriculture and cities some 10,000 years ago. Some genetic evolution may also have continued, but not very much, because industrial peoples are evidently similar to those of the surviving hunter-gatherer societies. Human nature, says Wilson, is "a hodge-podge of special genetic adaptations to an environment largely vanished, the world of the Ice-Age hunter-gatherer."

On Human Nature is Wilson's attempt to identify those traits of human behavior that are part of man's genetic evolution. In very few instances can any direct evidence exist, so Wilson's catalogue of genetically based traits necessarily depends heavily on his judgment. His method for spotting them is essentially to look for traits that both seem to be universal in human societies and which can be argued to have possessed some adaptive value in the hunter-gatherer's environment.

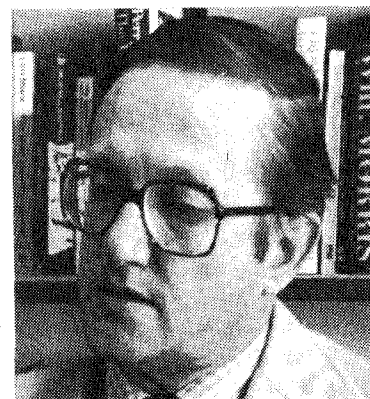
Wilson's treatment of the incest taboo provides one of the best examples of his method. The incest taboo has been intensively discussed by anthropologists. The explanation given by Claude Lévi-Strauss, for example, is that the taboo enables sisters and daughters to be used for power-building social exchanges instead of for mating. Nonsense, says Wilson. That may be a felicitous result but the deeper reason is that inbreeding produces offspring with a notably reduced chance of survival; natural selection has therefore favored

the evolution of an aversion to incest. The aversion is not dependent on an actual blood relationship: studies in Israel kibbutzim suggest that it automatically develops between persons who have been raised together to the age of six.

Wilson's explanation seems both simpler and more profound than Lévi-Strauss's. His argument is less compelling, though nevertheless provocative, when he contends that man's universal propensity toward religion may also have a genetic basis. Religions, he suggests, may have conferred a selective advantage on their practitioners by promoting allegiance and group cohesion in time of warfare. "The mind is predisposed—one can speculate the learning rules are physiologically programmed—to participate in a few processes of sacralization which in combination generate the institutions of organized religion."

Wilson believes that aggression is in-built in man, but not as a general instinct. There is a genetic predisposition toward certain types of aggression, of which culture defines the form. The brain appears to be programmed, he suggests, into such attitudes as categorizing others as either friends or aliens, fearing strangers and solving conflict by aggression. These learning rules "are most likely to have evolved during the past hundreds of thousands of years of human evolution and, thus, to have conferred a biological advantage on those who conformed to them with the greatest fidelity."

Turning to sex, Wilson believes that there exist only "modest" genetic differences between the sexes but that these have been "amplified by culture" into universal male dominance. Societies in the future "can probably cancel the modest genetic differences entirely by careful planning and training." Sex, at least as practiced by humans, is not procreative in purpose so much as a bonding mechanism to keep couples together while children are reared. A more general bonding behavior, the altruistic impulses that cement social groups, may also be programmed into the human gene set. By helping your kin survive, with whom you share varying proportions of genes in common, you help perpetuate your genes almost as fully as through your direct descendants. Kin selection, as the concept is known, accounts satisfactorily for the behavior of worker bees and ants; Wilson believes it undergirds the more generalized forms of altruism in man,



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such as the soldier's readiness to die in battle. Softer versions of the altruistic impulse furnish the social cement with which alliances are made. "Human behavior—like the deepest capacities for emotional response which drive and guide it—is the circuitous technique by which human genetic material has been and will be kept intact. Morality has no other demonstrable ultimate function."

If Wilson's theme can be put in a single sentence, it is that human nature is not the purely cultural artifact we assume it to be: the basic clay is genetic, even though culture shapes the form. For those who accept Darwin's theory, Wilson's general position is hard to deny. But scientific hypotheses are meant to be refutable, and a major difficulty of Wilson's is its untestability. It is all very well to posit genes favoring religiosity, but what is the use of the idea if it cannot be taken further? Wilson describes *On Human Nature* as a speculative essay, not a work of science. Yet he is evidently sure enough of some of his speculations to discuss the impractical consequences. With suitable education, societies, he maintains, could cancel out the genetic differences between the sexes if they felt it worth the effort. Through "conventional eugenics" (by which Wilson presumably means selective breeding) the species can change its own nature, installing "new patterns of sociality" in bits and pieces.

Wilson's most grandiose and least appealing scheme is to replace conventional religions with a mythology based on scientific materialism and incorporating a more objectively chosen value system. Gee-whiz wonders from the

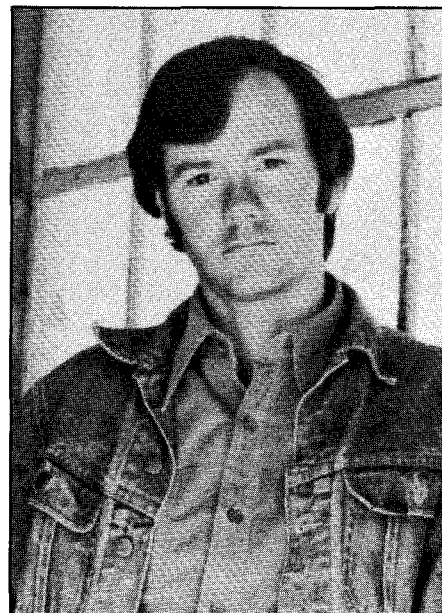
scientific textbooks—evolution, the Big Bang and so forth—would replace religious awe and the sense of the sacred. This false touch makes the reader wonder if Wilson here hasn't stepped too far afield. So does his complaint that magazines such as *The New Republic* "read as if basic science had halted during the nineteenth century." Wilson's grouse is that the literary and cultural life of the nation is too little influenced by scientists and their great thoughts and findings. If so, the fault rests squarely with the scientists: nobody is gagging them. The communications problem could perhaps lie with the conventions that at present require scientists, in their barely readable writings for each other, to pretend that their work is unmotivated by imagination, excitement, surprise or any other human quality.

On Human Nature, however, is a splendid departure from the dead-hand canons of the scientific "literature." Clarity, precision and boldness distinguish Wilson's attempt to complete the Darwinian revolution. He is dealing with matters that lie mostly beyond the reach of present scientific methods, and perhaps for that reason has chosen to present his ideas in a way that makes them accessible to the public at large as well as to his scientific peers. Don't listen to the cacophany now welling up from offended property-owners in the intellectual jungle: read Wilson's book and decide for yourself.

Nicholas Wade

Nicholas Wade is a reporter for *Science* magazine.

Anyone who has ever held a car at 80 on a flat Texas road for an hour or so, passing nobody and nothing, will have some appreciation for the theme of Allen Wier's novel, *Blanco*, set out in an epigraph by Wallace Stevens: "How should you walk in that space and know/Nothing of the madness of space . . ." In Wier's powerful novel, the physical desolation of the land around San Antonio—a region of parched rivers and dying towns—is mirrored by psychic emptiness as well.



Allen Wier

These two books—the novel and a collection of eight stories—are Wier's first; their simultaneous publication by Louisiana State University Press mark a significant debut in American fiction and an admirable achievement for LSU, which seems to be willing to move into the gap in our literature which is appearing as the New York houses become increasingly cautious and first-novel-shy. The two books share common themes, style, and, to some extent, setting; in many ways, both are mining the same fictional lode which has inspired the work of Wright Morris—the geographical and spiritual loneliness at the heart of the North American continent. Wier bears the comparison with an established master like Morris quite creditably; he has large gifts as a storyteller, his ear for prose is sensitive and sure, and he has a consistent and original view of the world and of art's place in it.

Set in the abandoned county seat of "the only county in Texas without an oil well," *Blanco* centers around three members of the Marrs family and the mad solitary space each of them inhabits. Like Will Jennings Brady in Morris's *The Works of Love*, "the man who

Blanco

by Allen Wier

(Louisiana State University Press; \$9.95)

Things About to Disappear

by Allen Wier

(Louisiana State University Press; \$10.95, \$4.95)

Shortly after Pearl Harbor, Franklin Roosevelt asked the nation's governors to aid fuel conservation by lowering speed limits on their highways to 35

miles per hour. All complied but the governor of Texas, who tartly told FDR that "if you drive 35 in Texas, you never get anywhere."

was more or less by himself," Wier's characters—Eunice, the widowed mother, Turk, her 45-year-old bachelor son, and June, her newly-married daughter—are lost in themselves, wandering in an interior world in which even the voices of those closest to them are muffled and far away.

Eunice's husband, Armon, liked to tease his children by faking suicide; now that he is actually dead, Eunice keeps her doors and windows locked in the blistering heat, for fear that drunks, Mexicans, and germs will sneak in and get her. She regards Turk, her only source of support and companionship, with possessive contempt, and does her best to disrupt his romance with a much-married high-school sweetheart. In self-defense, Turk has "learned to stop listening to Momma's talk"; but he has also lost the ability to hear anyone else. His hearing and eyesight failing, he feels himself dying inside:

There seemed to be no such thing as sudden death, we all pass away in a little more every day, drifting like sand down a dry hillside, giving up our lives like loose grass, slowly wearing down, losing our shape, carried away by rains and steady wind.

Turk's desperate isolation, and the anger he feels at himself and the obscure forces that have trapped him in this fading life, lead directly to the novel's most powerful scene, in which he surprises three burglars at the gas station where he works, methodically executes them with a shotgun, and then calmly kills himself as well.

June, thirteen years younger than Turk, has escaped the stifling life of her family by constructing an inner world of fantasy and obsessive, narcissistic sexuality. She marries Cage, a vacuous but flashy real estate developer, because she likes his fantasies of wealth and comfort: "Most of Cage's stories hadn't happened yet and she was in most of Cage's stories." In her marriage, she learns to play the role of the pampered wife with such perfection that she is left free to explore even more deeply her own inner world of imagination and solitude.

Blanco is a story about the fury that lurks beneath mundane surfaces—of the violence of the inner life. Wier matches his theme with a fine appreciation for the violence words can do on the page. Turk, hearing a group of Mexicans in a restaurant, marvels at the sound of spoken Spanish, which he does not understand: "words that ran together, twisted like vines and tree limbs, curly black words, coiled and shaped like iron

balconies on rich houses in San Antonio, words as slick and shiny and hard as wrought iron." Eunice's letters, which punctuate the story like a depressive chorus, twist and fracture experience into dry, brittle phrases:

Did I tell you that Mrs. Webb who lives in the Hillview Apts. has cancer? Those are the new apts. They built back in behind the school. Naomi said if she died, Mrs. Webb she meant, I could sell my house and get her apt. Mrs. Webb's apt. She has air cond. and central heat and comes furnished but I don't think I want to leave my old house, hot as it is and cold in the winter.

Because he writes about people who are more or less by themselves, Wier's best scenes have the intimate quality of private moments secretly observed. A day in June's life begins with a solitary cup of coffee in bed and ends with a marvelous autoerotic sequence in a coin-operated photo booth. Meanwhile, Cage sits in his office, building "Cage City" on his desk, out of paper clips, blotting paper, and erasers. But Wier does not leave his characters irredeemably locked in solitude. At the novel's end, he hints that June may be beginning to do what Will Brady never could—moving to

explore the world around her, her husband and her marriage, "like a bright moving snake finally working free of its old dead skin and darting onto new spring grass, its senses awake to new life." It is a fragile but satisfying conclusion; the book leaves us with one of fiction's finest gifts, a sense that we have been shown, not images or imitations, but life itself, unfolding, growing, unpredictable and strange.

Things About to Disappear echoes *Blanco* in theme and mood. The emphasis in these stories is on confinement, in the cells of prison, disease, old age, loneliness, and unfulfilled sexual desire. So much solitude can be daunting; at times, the reader may feel like Willis Ellis, the spelunker of "Love Affair with the Underground," who dangles into a new cavern at the end of a rope and confronts absolute darkness: "He stared below, held the lantern out for light, but all he saw was the soft glow of his khaki pants, the gleaming metal eyelets on his boots, and a foot or so of rope above his head before it vanished into the darkness."

We want to scream, to hear the sound of another voice, even if it is only an echoing answer from the cavernous

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solitude Wier's characters carry within themselves. When a voice does answer, it is delightful, as in "Mr. Ollie, Think of Baseball," in which an elderly sports fan gets comic revenge on a world that has ignored him by making off with a souvenir baseball caught in a minor-league ball park.

Grief is a recurring theme. The book begins with "An Elegy," lamenting the end of a friendship, and closes with the title story, mourning the end of a life and the victory of "the name that rhymed with *breath* and was forever." But as in *Blanco*, there is the promise of redemption, of a liberation which comes from confronting our griefs and delving into our imaginations. In a way, it is the power of fantasy which is the hero of Wier's stories—for example, in "Bob and the Other Man," whose hero lives for 35 years with two imaginary playmates for company, and then finds unexpectedly that his insubstantial friends have prepared him at last to make his escape into the wider world of experience.

In this and other stories, I was struck

by the vividness with which Wier has explored the two-edged gift of imagination, which every fiction writer loves and fears. The lonely hours of effort which a writer spends at his desk, talking to unreal playmates, may draw him away from life into a tenebrous, solitary world of the mind; but they may also offer him the chance to break out of himself in a way few others can—to see other people from the inside, to know life, even if briefly, as a whole. Wier's fictional imagination is strong and clear, and he seems aware of both its promise and its peril. No one who reads these two books will doubt that they are the work of a writer who has tapped into a powerful vein of narrative, and that he will be heard from again. Allen Wier is not about to disappear.

Garrett Epps

Garret Epps is the author of a novel, *The Shad Treatment*, which won the Lillian Smith Award for best fiction about the south in 1977.

Making News by Gaye Tuchman

(Free Press; \$13.95)

Discovering the News by Michael Schudson

(Basic Books; \$10.95)

Ever since Spiro Agnew inveighed against that small clique of elite commentators in 1969, there's been a renewed interest—prompted by equal proportions of *mea culpa* and fear of government reprisals—in the "objectivity" of the news. Ranging from the useful (the *Times* Op-Ed page, say) to the insufferable ("Point/Counterpoint"), media efforts to redress real or imagined imbalances in reporting or broadcasting have multiplied exponentially—spurred along, perhaps, by the post-Watergate climate of soul-baring. Now, two very different perspectives on how and why such a climate developed.

Their titles provide clues to the arguments of both books. *Discovering the News* surveys the field from a then-and-now viewpoint, tracing the rise of the American newspaper from the 1820s to

the present; *Making the News* tackles the current media-at-large. Both deal with objectivity as a golden ideal almost never realized; and both question whether it should be an ideal at all. "Objectivity," notes Schudson on the first page of *Discovering the News*, "is a peculiar demand to make of institutions which, as business corporations, are dedicated first of all to economic survival." It's like the weather: we all agree something needs to be done, but what?

Schudson's method is historical recapitulation, an assessment of how news was "invented" in the 19th century and grew in size, function, and complexity. During the Jacksonian era, the number of domestic weeklies and dailies nearly doubled as "penny papers" soared in popularity—sold, unlike the six-cent upper-class sheets, on the streets rather

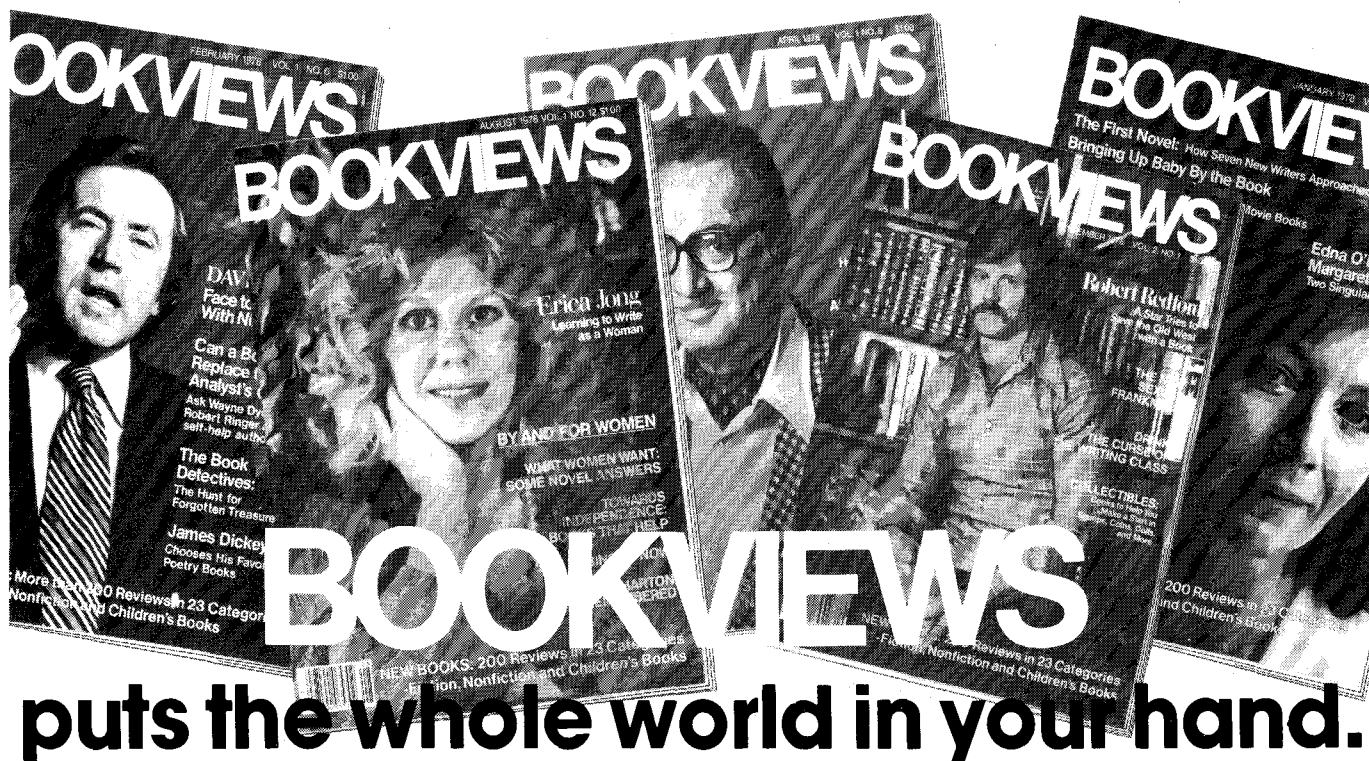
than by subscription, devoted less to mercantile intricacies than to social and personal items dear to a burgeoning urban middle class. Technological innovations—the steam press, the explosion of railroad construction, etc.—dovetailed with the new, widespread (but shallow) literacy, created a huge potential readership for enterprising editors to manipulate.

By the 1880s, when the ascension of the great New York papers began (Pulitzer revived the *World* in 1883; Hearst bought the *Journal* in 1895; Ochs bought the *Times* in 1896), facts were superficially king—"... without prejudice, color, and without style; all alike," muttered reporter Lincoln Steffens about the required reporting of the day. Below the lofty editorial surface, however, "getting the news" was rampant: the resulting synthesis of high idealism and juicy stories appealed to both (or all) sides of the native psyche, and papers prospered. The founding of *Time* by Luce and Hadden in 1923 epitomized the irresistible trend toward "interpretation," a melding of hitherto pigeonholed facts and opinions.

It's not hard to isolate a half-dozen influences on the decline of objectivism: the growth of story over informational journalism; the tempestuous careers of men like Pulitzer and Hearst ("You furnish the pictures and I'll furnish the war"); the quantum jump of public relations after World War I as an outgrowth of Allied propaganda; the rise of the syndicated columnist in the 1920s; the refusal of younger reporters to abide by what they perceived "objective reporting" to be—an oblique endorsement of the status quo. Tied up with the last influence, inevitably, was the "adversary culture" of the 1960s, cynical toward a society which condoned news management and Vietnam through its elected government. All documented by Schudson, who remains objective himself: "For the press to cooperate with government in keeping news from the public was one thing; for the government to keep information from the press was something else."

If Schudson's is a *Why* book, Tuchman's is a *How* book. Her subtitle, "A Study in the Construction of Reality," suggests that her aim is to examine the shaping, the refining, the framing that go into the news we end up scanning on the page or absorbing from the tube. "An occurrence is transformed into an event," Tuchman summarizes, "and an event is transformed into a news story." Her book would make an ad-

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mirable advanced manual for aspiring students of the media vocabulary: hard vs. soft news, "standard" shots on television (symbolic locations, "average" people, and the like), the use of fast or slow motion under commentary, facts vs. nuances (one recalls Norman Mailer chiding the baffled prosecutor at the Chicago Seven trial that "facts are nothing without their nuance"), the use of angles to sell a story and quotation marks as defense against charges of overpersonalizing. And she gauges the undeniable effect TV news had on bringing home the horrors of Vietnam to the public, although I missed any reference to the 1963 decision of the networks to expand nightly newcasts from fifteen minutes to a half hour, thereby paving the way for (a) actual war footage, (b) extended commentary.

Throughout *Making the News*, Tuchman concentrates on the theory that newsmaking actually reinforces things as they are, showing the consumer the grimness of the outside world and convincing him that knowledge is, *ipso facto*, action. In short, news soothes and narcotizes; it doesn't rouse or inspire. And its very formats and constructions make what the author brands "an analytic understanding of contemporary life" that much more remote.

Spreading herself between TV and newspaper sociology, Tuchman may try to accomplish too much, whereas Schudson focuses exclusively on the printed word. If nothing in his book quite matches the insights or depth in Tuchman's 10-page discussion of the media's relation to freedom of speech, Schudson's anecdotes makes up for it: the curious pomposity of editors like Jacob Riis who simply refused to acknowledge the existence of homosexuals, "There are no such creatures in this world;" the five-word definition of the *Times*' editor's feeling for the pulse of his readership, "Mr. Ochs is a crowd."

There are odd lacunae: Schudson barely mentions Agnew, whose Des Moines speech had a discernible effect on the media's view of itself in the last decade; Tuchman says that newsmakers assumed LBJ would "run for reelection despite his defeat" in the 1968 New Hampshire primary (which, numerically if not psychologically, he won). And both authors lose themselves in gassy rhetoric in their conclusions, all the more irritating after so much common sense and insight in the bulk of their books.

Still, both books provide some

provocative ideas on where news in America came from, what its function is now, and what it may be doing for us—and to us—in the future.

Steve Lawson

Steve Lawson teaches at Yale and has written for *TNR*, *American Film*, *The Nation*, *Commonweal*, *Horizon*, and other journals.

Brief Reviews

Current Nonfiction

**The Great Mutiny:
India 1857**
by Christopher Hibbert
(Viking; \$15.95)

A first glance suggests that Christopher Hibbert commandeered H.G. Wells's time machine before he wrote his 21st book. *The Great Mutiny*, in fact, owes its breathtaking vividness not only to the author's storytelling skills but to the vast number of eyewitnesses he enlisted in his cause. Casting his net wide for letters, telegrams, diaries, and memoirs, he discovered manuscripts overlooked by earlier investigators. What better *raison d'être* for a long and elaborately documented book on a subject treated and maltreated by generations of writers, including the redoubtable Marx and Engels?

Controversy invariably beclouds the picture when eyewitness reports run to the thousands. Historians are in accord, however, about the immediate cause of the Mutiny. Of Britain's 200,000-man army in India, 160,000 were natives. The sepoys, as they were called, lived comfortably by Indian standards, but their rigid exclusion from officers' ranks even in the face of 30 or 40 years' service, sporadic efforts to convert them, and a

conviction that all they believed was despised by their "betters," excited unrest. When Britain introduced the Enfield rifle, the unrest turned bitter. The powder and bullet of the Enfield were wrapped in a greasy paper which had to be bitten off to ignite the powder. Rumor had it that the grease was cow fat (an affront to the Hindus) or pig fat (an insult to the Moslems). Soon officers were being gunned down by the sepoys and mutiny was spreading to Lucknow, Meerut, Delhi, Cawnpore, Allahabad, and Indore.

The imprisonment and execution of mutineers led to retaliatory murders and rapine. While pitched battles usually revealed the superiority of British arms and British discipline, the English were burdened with an incredible number of colonels and generals who were superannuated, perennially under the weather, and hopelessly indecisive. More than two years passed, accordingly, before the last of the rebel armies was defeated. Victory is more conducive to arrogance than to wisdom. Parliament nevertheless learned from the Mutiny and in November 1858 took a giant step toward responsibility by dissolving the East India Company and putting India under the British crown.

The Great Mutiny paints two types of horror, natural and man-made. It is doubtful if Kipling himself depicted more movingly the struggles of non-natives to survive temperatures that could be as deadly as the bite of an asp. Hibbert writes of the devastations of cholera; of dogs, pigs, and vultures feeding on human corpses; of battalions of flies invading the food of half-starved men, women, and children and rendering it invisible. More terrifying still are the detailed descriptions of hangings, of tortures inflicted on soldiers and civilians alike.

In his earlier *Roots of Evil*, Hibbert ascribed the worldwide popularity of James Bond novels to the principle that even the best of men are at heart sadists. Suppose there's truth in this view rather than bile; readers nonetheless may find the butchery in the last chapters wearisome—a twice-told tale—and wish Hibbert had given himself more elbow room to analyze motives, causes, effects, and above all to relate the effects, and above all to relate the Mutiny to today's affairs.

James Walt

James Walt has written for *The Washington Post*, *The Washington Star*, and other publications.

War and the Liberal Conscience

by Michael Howard

(Rutgers University Press; \$8.00)

When men reflect on the problem of war, it is rarely a matter of idle speculation. For centuries political thinkers have sought to understand the causes of war, not out of theoretical interest, but out of an urgent, practical desire to prevent future wars. In *War and the Liberal Conscience*, Michael Howard outlines the history of the theories of war that liberal-minded men have formulated in the hope of eradicating that most abhorrent of political evils. But Howard's account is a discouraging one, because the history of liberal thought about war turns out to be the history of the failure, even the futility, of that whole intellectual enterprise.

Howard's schematic intellectual history covers a lot of ground, spanning the centuries from Erasmus to Kissinger in six short chapters that were originally delivered as lectures at Cambridge University. The theories he recounts are very familiar: the idea that the establishment of peace requires a cooperative international organization; the belief that wars are waged only between governments because "the people" are not naturally bellicose; the view that war is a tool of capitalist imperialism—all these ideas, to name just a few, are echoed in contemporary discussions of the subject.

But the very fact that many of these age-old theories remain common intellectual coin today is perceived by Howard as an historical anomaly; for his main thesis is that the history of international relations has proven the inadequacy of every liberal diagnosis of the causes of war. For example, the 18th century *philosophes* believed the sources of war lay in the militaristic ethos of the ruling elite, and saw prospects for peace in the emergence of the commercial class. In fact, the demise of the aristocratic warrior elite failed to bring peace to Europe and, ironically, capitalist interests were identified by later theories as the motive force behind all wars.

The liberal idea that the advance of democracy is the only cure for war fares no better in the face of historical evidence. Liberal faith in the peace-loving nature of "the people" was discredited on numerous occasions, from the Crimean War, which received

enthusiastic popular support in England, to the militarization of the masses by 20th-century totalitarian regimes. Similarly, the notion that "collective security" is the formula for peace was proven inadequate by the impotence of the League of Nations. And so on.

Howard's dismissal of certain ideas often seems a bit facile, but he builds up a fairly good case for his own general critique of the liberal tradition. The problem with liberal thinkers, Howard argues, lies in their "habit... of seeing war as a distinct and abstract entity about which one can generalize at large." Liberals have been essentially misguided in seeking to understand war in terms of a single general principle, and in their optimism that the application of a simple formula could put an end to war once and for all.

Howard's conclusion is rather anticlimactic because his critique of liberalism is well-worn and his own views about international relations date back to More and Hobbes. But his claim that "war is an inherent element in a system of sovereign states," has implications that are well worth reiterating: the pursuit of peace requires constant vigilance and a kind of wisdom that even the most well-intentioned ideology cannot provide.

Janet Hook

Janet Hook is an assistant editor of *The Public Interest*.

Sartre by Himself
a film directed by
Alexandre Astruc and
Michel Contat
translated by Richard Seaver
(Urizen Books; \$10.95)

In August, 1975, the month Jean-Paul Sartre turned 70, he talked with his old friend Michel Contat, in an interview in *The New York Review of Books*, about the erosions old age had worn in his life. For the previous two years, his health had been failing—partly due to his habit of using amphetamines while writing—

and he had begun to go blind. Without sight, "I no longer have even the slightest possibility of being actively engaged as a writer: my occupation as a writer is completely destroyed."

But he can still speak, and this interview demonstrated how very well: his conversation is frequently livelier and more succinct than his writing, and certainly more humorous. *Sartre By Himself* is the screenplay of a film biography of Sartre that Contat and filmmaker Alexandre Astruc had begun in 1972. It is a series of conversations the filmmakers held with Sartre and several others of his old friends, including Simone de Beauvoir—who also seems more spirited in conversation than on paper. (The film, which premiered in France in 1976, will probably be distributed in the United States in 1979.)

In conversation, Sartre, the existentialist philosopher-author who expounded his ideas via remote, detached, jaded anti-heroes, is capable of arguing so loudly and passionately with de Beauvoir over each other's manuscripts that visitors dare not knock. He is capable of describing himself wryly as a "walking contradiction": while preaching proletarian revolution, he knows that he remains a "classical" intellectual, mired in middle-class values. Since he turned 50, his pet project—which blindness has since halted—has been a four-volume study of Flaubert, "which is not exactly of immediate interest to the working class." One reason for his bind is that he began to sympathize with the workers too late in life: "No one wants me to do my stint on the assembly line; I'd be sent back out to pasture the day I arrived."

Sartre uses the film as a chance for an oral intellectual autobiography that updates his moral development since he described his youth in *The Words*. At nine, he contracted what he calls a Flaubertian "neurosis of literature," a conviction that "nothing was more beautiful than writing," that a writer should strive to create immortal works, and that "the writer's life ought to be understood through his work." In the mid-1950s, he realized that "there was a great deal more to life than writing" and that at some point in his career, a writer had to make a political commitment. He refused the Nobel Prize, and embarked on various political projects.

But a few experiments with mescaline, and his support of socialist revolution must coexist with his bourgeois tastes for gossip, pretty women, and cafés. The screenplay's

conversations unmask a major 20th-century thinker who makes Freudian slips, believes that he is a slow learner compared to de Beauvoir, and can't stand discussions with other intellectuals: "I'm bored out of my mind when I have to converse in the realm of ideas." Sartre dismisses the classical education he acquired at the Ecole Normale as "a lousy culture" but confesses that there, "I can really say without reservation that I was happy." As a professor of philosophy, he despised his all-too-conventional profession, yet he maintained a prototypical open classroom and never bored his students. And during one conversation, de Beauvoir effectively shatters popular romantic images of existentialist salons in Parisian cafés: "Did we still work in cafés after the war? Less than before, I'm sure. I say that because you moved in with your mother on the rue Bonaparte."

In these contradictions lie Sartre's humanity and his considerable charm. He is obviously at ease with the uneven fit of his life's various pieces; contradictions do not mean that he has compromised himself. Richard Seaver's fluid translation helps the screenplay communicate the strengths and contentment in Sartre's nature. A cast of characters would also have helped; aside from de Beauvoir, most of Sartre's friends are unfamiliar to Americans. The photographs accompanying the text are well chosen: they show us Sartre's ugliness, of which he speaks, and also reveal a detail that he does not mention: he is an incessant smoker.

Ann Marie Cunningham

Ann Marie Cunningham, senior editor of *Natural History*, frequently translates French fiction and non-fiction.

Kauffmann, from page 26

more faithful to the original . . . than was Fred Stone and David Montgomery's 1903 vehicle." But the earlier musical was so successful that it was burlesqued eight years after it opened in a revue called *The Passing Show* of 1913. That's a sample of the information to be had from *American Musical Theater: A Chronicle* by Gerald Bordman (Oxford; \$35.00) Bordman's book is a mere 688 large double-columned pages, plus another 40 pages of appendix and

indexes. His preparation for this job was to get a doctorate in Medieval English literature. He began his chronicle in the figurative middle ages of the musical, the 18th century, and he continues up to *Ain't Misbehavin'*.

The book is divided into five "acts," each of which is a distinctive period of musical writing, with periods of "intermission" between the acts; every section, including "intermissions," is subdivided into seasons. One outstanding achievement in the book is its subjective tone. Obviously Bordman depended on reviews in the past and, to some extent, in the present, for his value judgments, and he frequently cites his sources; but all the material is so thoroughly ingested that the overall effect is immediacy, as if he were reporting his personal experience of thousands of shows through a couple of centuries.

He uses one problematic device. Often the narrative is interrupted for brief biographies of people coming into prominence at that moment, but these notes are left incomplete, as if Bordman thought it would be harsh to mention subsequent death at the moment of debut. Thus for all that the reader knows, Reginald De Koven, b. 1859, is still living. A better plan might have been to save those notes for the appendix, which now only lists works for the entries, and to make them fuller.

In his preface Bordman says that "few readers will want to read this book from beginning to end but will rather 'dip into' it." Probably true. I only leafed through the book myself, but I leafed slowly, and it was unexpectedly rewarding. Bordman begins each major section and many seasonal accounts with a state-of-the-art summary, so as one goes through the book one gets a kind of graph of the fluctuation of invention and the arrival and waning of influences—something like a slower version of flicking the pages of one of those books with illustrations in the corner that move when flicked. Bordman is candid, sound as far as one can judge, and has some sharp insights. "In a very important sense . . . *Hair* was a failure, for it failed to usher in a new era in the American Musical Theater."

He warns us in his preface that he has had to skim on statistics—the names of every important contributor to every show—in order to keep the book portable. A companion volume of these statistics is en route. Meanwhile his book, supplemented by the encyclopedias of Stanley Green and David Ewen and the Lewine-Simon listing of songs, should take care of most factual

needs. Bordman provides stylistic analysis (like the passage describing how jazz brought about the standard 32-bar popular song), but chiefly he is telling a story, one that is both constituent and reflective of our cultural history. (For example, *The Wiz*.)

Correspondence

Politics in Spain

To the editors:

Michael Ledeen's article in the October 28 issue of *TNR* entitled "Spain's Miracle" should be employed to demonstrate the perils of political coverage of complex foreign political developments by passing tourists.

Despite its brevity the writer has managed to include an impressive number of inaccuracies, half-truths, and misperceptions.

Item—Ledeen states that unemployment is at seven percent (it is higher) "but prospects are not bad for improvement in this sector as well." This judgment runs counter to most knowledgeable opinion which foresees a disquieting rise in the jobless rate.

Item—If it were true, as Ledeen informs us, that the entire Basque separatist movement is terrorist, Spain would indeed find itself in serious difficulties. In fact, most of the separatist groups are not terrorist-oriented. The violent ones are constituted by the ETA which is presently composed of some estimated 120 young fanatics between the ages of 17 and 25.

Item—"In the past the Russians have supported Spanish claims to the Canary Islands, in contrast with Carrillo who attacked the claim as imperialistic." This is wholly untrue; the Spanish Communists have been very careful to associate themselves with the official claim to the Canaries. To have done otherwise would amount to political suicide.

Ledeen then goes on to interpret the recent shift by the USSR to a position of opposing Spanish claims to the Canaries as clearly demonstrating "that Brezhnev and Carrillo are working more closely than many believed" and suggesting "that the era of Euro-Communism—understood as the attempt of European Communist Parties to develop an in-

dependent worldview—is drawing to a close.”

It is unfortunate that the only *New Republic* article, in God knows how long, to deal with Spain presents such an ignorant and ill-informed view.

Benjamin Martin
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Innovative locutions

To the editors:

Although I thoroughly enjoyed Henry Fairlie's "The Readers of Serious Magazines" (TNR, October 21), I must confess that I found his brief aside on the "Americanization of English prose" to be curious and amusing. As far as I know, Americans still *perform* rather than *provide* functions. Moreover, I challenge Mr. Fairlie to provide (perform?) his readers with a single article in a serious American journal that employs what he alleges to be a "wholly American form": "rearing up." Americans have surely been responsible for many perversions of the mother tongue, but I am afraid that we can not take credit for these particular linguistic innovations. "Oh, *Spectator*"—indeed!

John T. S. Keeler
Middlebury College

Saying no to cigarettes

To the editors:

It is commendable, as James Fallows points out ("Ashtray Libertarians," TNR, October 21, that *The New Yorker*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Scientific American* and *Reader's Digest* all feel free to say no to the cigarette advertisers. However, *Seventeen Magazine* feels slighted. We have been turning down cigarette advertising for years.

Ray Robinson
Managing Editor

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
1220 Nineteenth Street, N.W.
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I bet just about everyone has been yawning over the most recent scandal in our midst. Somehow the venal crimes of the GSA (General Services Administration) don't excite much moral outrage. Art Metal (is that a man?; no it's a company that manufactures steel office furniture) does not make a very colorful villain, and neither does a faceless batch of crooked petty officials. The GSA affair involves a lot of money, but a real Washington scandal requires a scoundrel, and so far GSA doesn't have one.

The heavily publicized investigations into the GSA's peculiar *modus operandi* apparently have not made much of an impression even on those doing work for the agency. A couple of weeks ago a painting contractor still had the audacity to try and play by the old rules—right out in the open. At 9:30 a.m. on October 18 in the courtyard of the Interstate Commerce Commission building (just a block from the Department of Justice), Dimitrios Mavrophilipos allegedly offered a GSA inspector \$5000 in cash so that he could be paid \$60,000 for a two-coat paint job, though he'd only put on one. The inspector, new to his job and as yet uncorrupted, had invited the FBI to watch the brief encounter.

If we all seem a little jaded these days, unable to work up a choler about these building scandals, Benjamin Henry Latrobe, the nation's first "Surveyor of the Public Buildings," was a feisty fellow who could. Apparently the building scene was a big mess back then as well, and Latrobe had a hard time in his new job. When he was first dismissed in 1812 by a Congress not overly fond of him (he later came back to help repair a war-torn Capitol, only to be dismissed again), he had nothing pleasant to say: "I am bidding an eternal adieu to the malice, backbiting, and slander, trickery, fraud & hypocrisy, lofty pretensions and scanty means, boasts of patriotism & bargaining of conscience, pretense of religion & breach of her laws, starving doctors, thriving attorneys, white-washing jail oaths, upstart haughtiness & depressed merit, & five thousand other nuisances that constitute the very essence of this community [Washington] . . . the more you stir it, the more it stinketh."

For those who care to come to the capital, Washington's welcome will

henceforth be less hearty. The budget of the Union Station Visitor Center has been slashed by \$2.3 million. I don't quite know what new suffering this austerity measure is supposed to entail. Right now there is nothing friendly, welcoming or entertaining about the two cavernous rooms that loom between the train platforms and the street. The theme song that accompanies the slide show flashing on the huge screen in a hole in the second of the rooms is likely to run through a visitor's head again and again, and ruin at least one day in the capital. The rather inappropriate opulence—the carpeted expanse, the wood veneer—seems guaranteed to dispel any visitor's uplifting sentiments of good citizenship and to elicit dispiriting doubts about the good sense of government. My hope is that now that the funds are gone, the carpet will wear quickly, the wood will crack, the antiseptic smell will evaporate. Then fruit sellers will feel free to bring in their tables, and an appropriately decrepit bakery stand will open up and serve a variety of greasy doughnuts and hard cookies. Perhaps some barber chairs will be installed, and then Washington will have what every other self-respecting city has: a proper train station.

Washington boasts a specialty of its own: drugstores on almost every corner. There must be more of them in this city than in all the cities on the Eastern seaboard put together. However, they seem to come in just three varieties: People's, Drug Fair, and Dart Drugs (for the plain folks, the festive sort, and the violent types?). Inside, all three are virtually indistinguishable—and not easily characterizable. There is a prescription counter and at least one aisle of health supplies, as you might expect in a pharmacy. But there is also a lunch counter, and aisle after aisle of groceries, gardening supplies, pet food, auto accessories—you name it. Maybe drugstores are where Washington satisfies its craving for diversity, which certainly isn't satisfied anywhere else. They are a kind of all-purpose, no-purpose store that is peculiarly suited to this peculiar city.

Everybody's most dismal anecdote these days has something to do with the housing situation. It is abysmal for everyone

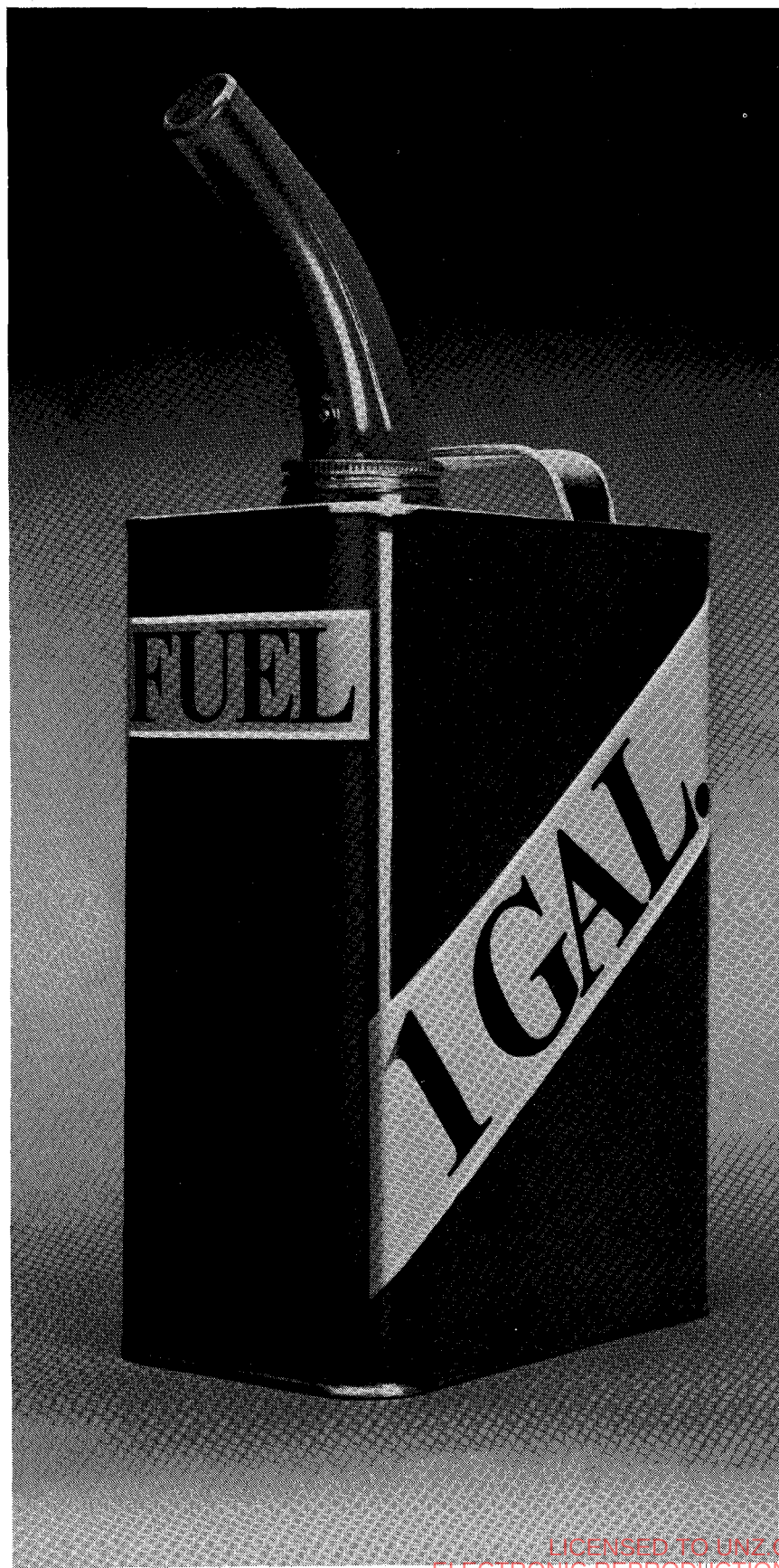
except landlords. I've seen a little of the housing scene for young single types in Washington this fall. Few can afford to live alone; not too many of the pushy, picky people who arrive here to seek their fortunes are willing to resort to the dull suburbs. Which means they must undertake getting into a group house—and I mean getting into, not just plain renting. The old first come (with check in hand), first served rule doesn't apply. Rather, a mysterious application and judging process takes place—only there's no resume, no SAT scores, just the fearful interview on which all hinges. By some fluke, I got my first choice house. That is, I got into the first house I looked at. If you get chosen, you don't turn it down, because you never know when you might be lucky again. Then I got yoked into helping select the remaining few to fill the house—an experience that may ensure I never become a helpful, interviewing alumna. I met more of the under-30 Washington set than I ever had before or hope to again. I found myself turning people down because they acted too much like kids at a job or college interview, because they admitted to a probably healthy desire to sing lustily upon waking, because they came with motorcycles, huge drafting tables or unappealing boyfriends or girlfriends. Too soon I lost all interest in a vibrant, original personality as a housemate and searched for a quiet mouse type instead—and couldn't even do that with a very whole heart. After all, who's to decide who deserves what shelter from the elements?

One edifice in Washington reigns uncensured: I. M. Pei's angular beauty, the East Wing of the National Gallery. The building seems to get rosier and rosier as the days pass. A healthy glow, not a modest blush, now tints the well-loved marble. Also, one of its razor-sharp edges already seems to be smooth and worn, at just about the height that a hand might reach. I couldn't resist touching, too, and I thought of the shining nose of the bronze Medici boar in Florence and the melted feet of marble Christs in Rome that have submitted to stroking for centuries. These are sculptures that bear the marks of having moved men—one way or another.

A. H.

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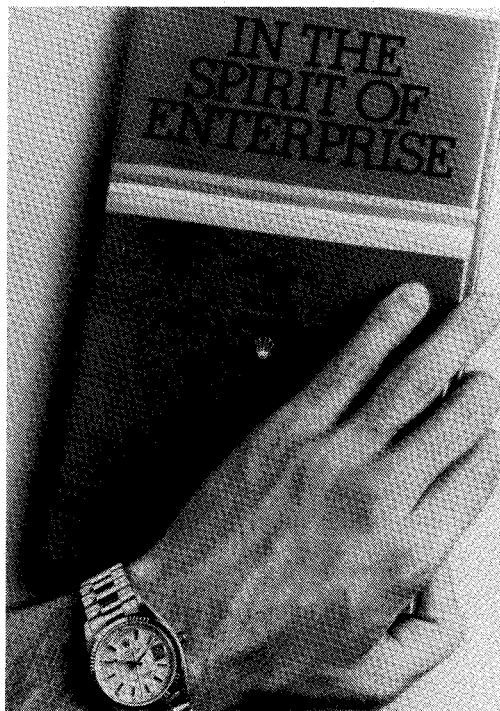
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